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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify and describe the decision-making processes in senior high schools that were implementing programs of individualized schooling. Field methodology, including interviews, observations, and analysis of documents, was used to gather data in six senior high schools of varying size located throughout the country, diverse in socioeconomic levels, and varying in ethnic composition. Conceptual frameworks from Individually Guided Education (IGE) literature and from change, decision, and organization theories were used to describe underlying philosophies of decision-making; the structures, processes, groups, and organizational dimensions for decision-making; the involvement of personnel in the decision-making process; and satisfaction of school personnel with structures, processes, and involvement in decision-making. Among the major conclusions of the study are that the decision-making structures and processes utilized within the school make a significant contribution to the successful implementation of individualized schooling; and that the principal performs a major role in determining the decision-making policy and in implementing the decision-making structures and processes. As a result of these and other conclusions, numerous implications for practice and further research were suggested. (Author/MLF)

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Technical Report No. 460

ACTUAL AND IDEAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES UTILIZED IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS THAT INDIVIDUALIZE INSTRUCTION

by

Arthur Noel Watkins

Report from the Project on
Studies of Administration and Organization for Instruction

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- conducting and synthesizing research to clarify the processes of school-age children's learning and development
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- developing and demonstrating improved instructional strategies, processes, and materials for students, teachers, and school administrators
- providing assistance to educators which helps transfer the outcomes of research and development to improved practice in local schools and teacher education institutions

The Wisconsin Research and Development Center is supported with funds from the National Institute of Education and the University of Wisconsin.

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Abstract

ACTUAL AND IDEAL DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES UTILIZED IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS THAT INDIVIDUALIZE INSTRUCTION

Arthur Noel Watkins

Under the Supervision of Professor James M. Lipham

The purpose of this study was to identify and describe the decision-making processes in senior high schools that were implementing programs of individualized schooling. Field methodology, including interviews, observations, and analysis of documents was used to gather data in six senior high schools of varying size located throughout the country, diverse in socioeconomic levels, and varying in ethnic composition. Conceptual frameworks from IGE literature and from change, decision, and organization theories were used to describe underlying philosophies of decision making; the structures, processes, groups, and organizational dimensions for decision making; the involvement of personnel in the decision-making process; and satisfaction of school personnel with structures, processes, and involvement in decision making.

The major conclusions of the study were as follows:

1. The decision-making structures and processes utilized within the school make a significant contribution to the successful implementation of individualized schooling.

2. An articulated philosophy of individualized schooling is essential as a basis for policy and managerial decision making.
3. An articulated policy for making decisions is essential to the successful implementation of an innovative instructional program.
4. The principal performs a major role in determining the decision-making policy and in implementing the decision-making structures and processes.
5. The decision-making process consists primarily of authority decision making utilizing the participative approach.
6. A high level of staff participation in the decision making process is characteristic of schools implementing programs of individualized schooling, is perceived by staff to be much higher than in traditional schools, is a significant factor in the successful implementation of innovative instructional programs, and contributes highly to staff satisfaction.
7. Formal participation by students and parents in decision making is negligible and is not generally sought.
8. Decision making within the school occurs primarily in small group settings, using a group process with a search for consensus.

9. Decision-making structures highly satisfying to staff are those which facilitate intradepartmental and interdepartmental exchange of information and opinion, accelerate decision making at the teaching-learning level, and afford ready access to administrators.
10. Although the impact of the school board and district office is increasing, appropriate districtwide decision-making structures have not yet been developed.
11. Although centralization of the decision-making process ranges from high to low, staff satisfaction remains high because the level of staff participation is high.
12. The decision-making process becomes less heuristic and more routinized as implementation of the innovation proceeds through the stages of the change process.

As a result of these conclusions, numerous implications for practice and further research were suggested.

APPROVED BY: James M. Lipka

DATE: May 9, 1978

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

A central issue in the current discussion about secondary education in the United States, indeed throughout the world, is the concern that schools, particularly senior high schools, are not sufficiently responsive to the educational needs of each student. A number of recent studies and reports, e.g., Brown (1973); Gibbons (1976); Newcomber (1975); Klausmeier (1977); and Weinstock (1973) have expressed this opinion or made recommendations to redress the problem. They have emphasized the importance of individualizing each student's program to meet educational and vocational needs. They have also stressed the importance of the administrative and organizational arrangements which facilitate the implementation of an individualized program for each student. Whether explicitly or implicitly, the reports have recommended the utilization of shared decision-making structures and processes which differ from those which have traditionally prevailed in high school.

The need exists to develop decision-making models that will facilitate the kinds of individualized programs that have been proposed so that those who wish to reform education may do so readily and more effectively (Ennick and Peterson, 1978).

The development of such models, however, is handicapped by several factors. There is no comprehensive decision making model

which applies to secondary schools. Neither is there adequate knowledge of the decision-making structures and processes which have been developed to facilitate individualized programs, even in those schools which already have implemented them. Nor is it known which structures and processes are successful. Therefore, it is necessary to accumulate data about them as a prerequisite to theory building and to developing of a body of successful practices which innovative schools may choose to emulate.

This study, one of three companion studies conducted in conjunction with Daresh (1978) and Neiner (1978) at the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Individualized Schooling consisted of an analysis of decision making in six senior high schools making attempts to individualize instruction. Field methodology was used to investigate and describe the decision-making structures and the related organizational dimensions.

This chapter includes treatment of the background of the study, a statement of the problem, the theoretical foundations of the study, the significance of the research, and an overview of the study.

Background of the Study

Prior to 1977, the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Individualized Schooling at the University of Wisconsin-Madison placed programmatic emphasis on the process of individualized schooling in elementary schools. As a result, Individually Guided

Education (IGE) was introduced as an alternative form of education and has been adopted by over two thousand elementary schools throughout the United States.

In the winter of 1977, the Research and Development Center initiated an extension of the principles and practices of IGE to secondary schools. Klausmeier (1977) stated a set of process objectives which were to be used as a framework for developing a model for individualized secondary schooling. These process objectives were introduced in the form of a working paper to a group of secondary school personnel who gathered for a conference sponsored by the Center in the spring of 1977.

Participants at the conference, who represented middle, junior, and senior high schools from across the nation, were asked to examine the process objectives and to indicate the extent to which they were desirable and feasible with regard to implementation in their schools. Discussions with conference participants concerning the process objectives revealed that any subsequent studies of secondary schools would need to encompass middle, junior and senior high schools.

After the conference, two studies (Klausmeier, T., 1978, and Maier, 1978) were conducted as part of the work of the Administration and Organization for Instruction Unit in the Research and Development Center. Thomas Klausmeier investigated the perceived desirability and implementation of the IGE/Secondary objectives in six junior high and middle schools. Analyses of the data showed that the desirability of implementing the objectives was high but the

implementation was less than adequate. Maier similarly analyzed five senior high schools. Respondents in these schools saw complex issues in senior high schools which they felt would inhibit the implementation of individualized schooling. Clearly, it was necessary tc explore alternative modes of administering and organizing instruction in senior high schools if individualized programs were to achieve success at that level.

The current work of the Administration and Organization for Instruction unit is focused on the exploration of various administrative and organizational patterns which facilitate the individualization of secondary schooling. As a result of these and other studies to follow, alternative models will be generated and offered to senior high schools seeking to change their admininstrative and organizational structures to facilitate individualized schooling.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of the study was to identify and describe the decision-making structures and related organizational dimensions that characterized senior high schools attempting to implement programs of individualized schooling. The problem and the questions to be addressed were defined and guided by a number of factors relating to the selected schools.

First, each of the schools had been implementing individualized programs over varying periods of time.

Second, the operationalization of the concept of individualized schooling was not necessarily the same in each school. Moreover, the administrative and organizational components differed from school to school.

Third, a number of organizational dimensions would be of significance in the decision-making process in schools.

Fourth, it appeared that the nature of staff involvement in decision making in innovative schools would differ from that in traditional schools.

Fifth, it was assumed that school personnel would have developed opinions as to the value they attached to the decision-making structures and to their involvement in them.

Therefore, this study was designed to address the following questions:

1. What is the philosophy of decision making which underlies the structures and processes?
2. What decision-making structures have been established?
3. What organizational dimensions are of significance?
4. What is the involvement of personnel in decision making?
5. What value do school personnel attach to the structures and processes for decision making?

Theoretical constructs described in the following literature review were used to develop an analytic framework for the investigation. Variables considered to be most useful were examined during the research. However, the possibility of significant unanticipated

variables was kept in mind. Constructs not having usefulness in explaining the structures and processes were viewed as discardable.

Review of the Literature

The conceptual frameworks used in this study included IGE literature, change theory, organization theory, and decision theory.

IGE Literature

Individually Guided Education (IGE) was developed to provide "a comprehensive system of education and instruction designed to produce higher educational achievements through providing well for differences among students in rate of learning, learning styles and other characteristics" (Klausmeier, Quilling, Sorenson, Way, and Glasrud, 1971, p. 17). To achieve this purpose in elementary schools, a model consisting of seven interrelated components was utilized: multiunit organizational and administrative arrangements, instructional programming for the individual student, curricular materials compatible with the philosophy of IGE, evaluation for educational decision making, home-school-community relations, facilitative environments for IGE and continuing research and development.

Recently, this model has been expanded as a focus for reform and renewal of secondary education by Klausmeier (1977). The expanded model consists of nine components: an administrative structure designed for individualized instruction; an organization for

individualized instruction; the other components for IGE/Elementary; and another component, community learning experiences. The components which were of primary concern in this study were those which related to decision making.

The multiunit organization of IGE/Elementary was developed "to foster participation in decision making and the assumption of responsibility for implementing decisions and evaluating educational outcomes" (Lipham & Walter, 1977). It was operative at three interrelated hierarchical levels: the Instruction and Research Unit at the learning-teaching level, the Instructional Improvement Committee at the school building level, and the Systemwide Program Committee at the district level. It altered considerably the traditional decision-making roles of the principal and other personnel. Traditional decision-making responsibilities were shared and new responsibilities were added. Professional rather than positional role relationships were emphasized to foster "emergent creative leadership behavior on the part of all personnel in the school" (Lipham, 1976). Whereas in the conventional school most buildingwide decisions are the prerogative of the principal and most instructional decisions rest with the individual teacher, in the multiunit IGE school the major decisions are shared (Lipham & Walter, 1977).

The administrative arrangements for IGE/Secondary were proposed in accordance with the principles which gave direction to the multiunit organization of IGE/Elementary. It was recognized, however, that differences in structures would occur as a consequence

of school size, the differences in the particular programs of individualized schooling, and the existence of traditional high school administrative arrangements, such as subject departments.

The proposed components outlined the leadership responsibilities of the principal in planning, coordinating, and evaluating the programs related to the nine components of IGE/Secondary. Also suggested were teacher-advisor programs and decision-making structures which involved shared decision making. The proposed decision-making structures may be categorized as "authoritative decision-making with member participation" (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971).

Several studies of IGE elementary schools have shown the multiunit structure to be effective in changing the school from a static, mechanistic institution to an organic, dynamic organization (Lipham, 1976). Research regarding the decision-making process in IGE/Elementary schools showed that there was a higher degree of teacher involvement in decision making in IGE, as compared with non-IGE schools (Walter, 1973; Herrick, 1974). Teachers in IGE schools felt that they were involved in making powerful and relevant instructional decisions (Holmquist, 1976; Kawleski, 1977), but that they were not as involved in schoolwide and districtwide decisions as they would like (Wright, 1976). IGE teachers also felt that their values and viewpoints were represented appropriately in the decision-making structure of the school (Nerlinger, 1975; Moyle, 1977). There was a higher degree of work interdependence and open communication networks in IGE, as compared with non-IGE schools

(Pellegrin, 1969). However, there was some staff dissatisfaction with the communication networks and with the failure to follow through the several steps of decision-making process (Kawleski, 1977; Moyle, 1977).

Research regarding IGE/Secondary has only begun. In April, 1977, participants at the workshop on educational reform held at Madison, Wisconsin, were asked to rate the comprehensive and enabling objectives proposed for IGE Secondary. They regarded the total set of components and enabling objectives as a desirable form of individualized schooling (Klausmeier, 1977). Preliminary analyses of questionnaires devised by Maier (1978) and Thomas Klausmeier (1978) revealed that secondary administrators, departmental chairpersons, teachers and counselors give high ratings to the desirability of the IGE/Secondary components. Maier's study also showed that the perceived feasibility of implementing the objectives in senior high schools was low.

Change Theory

Each school in this study had attempted to implement educational innovation. Each had the common objective of developing programs that would make their schools responsive to the needs of individual students. The operationalization of this objective, however, differed among the schools. The particular stage of the change process at which each of the schools was located also varied. This was expected to be an important variable with regard to the

changing character of the decision-making structures and processes over time. Therefore, this study was concerned not only with describing the decision-making structures, groups, and processes, but also with describing the relationships among these variables, given the change stage in which a particular school was located.

Because each school was not following a common strategy for implementing the individualized programs, it was necessary to select a model which would have power and parsimony to describe the change stage in which each school was placed. A number of attempts have been made to develop categories of the time stages of innovations (Harvey and Mills, 1970; and Zaltman, Duncan and Holbek, 1973). The Hage and Aiken (1970) model of organizational change was selected because it had power to match the stages of innovation with the activities in selected schools. Hage and Aiken (1970, p. 94) described the following four stages in the innovative processes of organizations:

> Evaluation--organizational decision makers (a) determine that their system is not accomplishing its goals as effectively as it could and (b) change the goals of their system.
>
> Initiation--concerned with decision making and problem solving to find the resources that are required for the innovation.
>
> Implementation--includes initial attempt to integrate the innovation into the organization. Resistance and disequilibrium are likely to be high because of unexpected problems and sources of resistance that are likely to be encountered as the innovation is actually introduced.

> Routinization--follows the initial trial that took place in the implementation stage. In routinization the decision is made to retain the innovation and fully integrate it into the ongoing activities of the organization.

This model allows for recycling of the process. After routinization, or any of the stages, the organization may return to evaluation (or any of the stages) and repeat the process.

In this study, the innovative process in each school was identified by reference to the stages of Hage and Aiken's typology.

Routinization of the Decision-Making Process

Several researchers have shown that different types of decisional processes are appropriate, and consequently implemented, at different points in time in implementing an innovation. Guetskow and Simon (1955) and Guetskow and Dill (1950) found that highly centralized communication networks facilitated effective performance of routine problem solving and that networks low in centralization facilitated non-routine problem solving. Burns and Stalker (1961) showed that different types of organizational structures were effective in different situations. They identified two types of organization that characterized decision making under different conditions. Mechanistic structures were found in organizations operating under stable conditions; organic structures under unstable conditions. The organic structure, by enhancing participation of organizational members in decision making and communication

facilitated information-gathering and processing needs of the organization.

Duncan's study (1973) showed that decision units alternate over time between flexibility and stability in structure when dealing with non-routine and routine decisions and that this changes in accordance with perceived environmental uncertainty. Decision units that experienced high uncertainty, i.e., innovative structures, exhibited the greatest differences in their routine and non-routine decision-making structures.

Shepherd (1967) described the alternation which takes place between the initiation stage and the implementation stage of the innovation process. Regarding the initiation stage, Shepherd said,

> A quality of openness is needed so that diverse and heterogeneous persons can contribute, and so that many alternatives can be explored. For implementation, however, a quite different quality may be needed: singleness of purpose, functional division of labor responsibility and authority, discipline, the drawing of internal communication boundaries, and so on (p. 474).

Research by Coughlin et al. (1972) also indicated that a decentralized, collective decision structure may be used during the initiation stage of the innovation process in schools. A relatively centralized authority structure may then be used during the implementation stage.

These studies suggest that innovative organizations, such as schools implementing programs of individualized schooling, change their decision-making structures and processes as they move through

the various stages of the innovation process. At the evaluation and initiation stages, the decision process may be characterized by creative decision making, low centralization, and high levels of participation. At the routinization stage the decision process may be characterized by routine decision making, high centralization, and low levels of participation.

For the purposes of this study, routinization of the decision process was described in terms of the characteristics of the decision-making process (whether heuristic or routine)--described below--and respondents' perceptions of the changes that had taken place, or were taking place, in the decision-making process.

Decision Theory

Decision theory provided the major framework for analyzing the structural and process dimensions of decision-making.

One typology for analyzing decision making in group situations distinguishes between heuristic and routine decision making (Lipham & Hoeh, 1974). The heuristic, or creative, type of decision making is most commonly utilized when the goals of the organization are not clearly identified and the roles, procedures, and technologies for attaining the goals are neither defined nor agreed to--such as when a school staff engages in an evaluation of traditional high schools when a new school is being established. The routine mode is most commonly utilized when the organization has established goals and the role relationships, rules, and procedures for attaining

them--such as when a school staff has defined the objectives and methodologies of their innovative program. In routine decision making there is usually a hierarchical situation, role behavior is characterized by specialized yet coordinated effort, the processes utilized are largely formal, and the relationships themselves are likely to be somewhat stressful (Lipham and Hoeh, p. 163). In heuristic decision making, there is little emphasis on hierarchical structure, role behavior is characterized by freedom of each individual to explore all ideas bearing on an issue, and the processes utilized are characterized by free and open definition and generation of alternative solutions. The emotional social tone is relatively relaxed, giving evidence of openness, originality, and consensus seeking (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974, p. 163).

Another useful typology for analyzing decision making in group situations includes authority decisions and collective decisions as proposed by Rogers and Shoemaker (1971). The basis of their categorization was the degree to which members of the organization could participate in the decision-making process of an innovating organization. In authority decisions the decision is made, whether initiated or controlled, from the top of the organizational hierarchy. In collective decisions, the decisions are made by all or by a majority of the organizations' members.

This typology was useful because school boards require building principals to be accountable for the decisions made within a school. Although much decision making in schools is called "shared,"

"collegiate," or "collaborative," the authority for making school-wide decisions rests with the principal--hence members of the staff must comply. As well, both the district office and the school board impose constraints, since they may have ultimate authority for the decisions made.

Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) identified two sub-categories of authority decisions: (1) decisions with member participation (the participative approach) and (2) decisions without member participation (the authoritative approach). An example of an authoritative approach is the unilateral decision on the part of the principal to require his teachers to adopt a particular form of reporting to parents. A participative approach is for the principal to involve his teachers in the decision on how reporting to parents might be conducted. Thus, in the participative approach there is wide sharing of power. The decision to implement a proposal ultimately is made by the person in the power position, but it is done in consultation with those affected by and required to implement it.

Authority decision making, although often involving resistance to change (Wilson, 1966; McGivney & Bowles, 1972), is usually regarded as efficient because it can be done within a relatively short time, especially when conducted without member participation (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971). However, "changes implemented by the authoritative approach are less likely to be implemented satisfactorily than are those decided by the participative approach" (Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971, p. 314). The underlying assumption is

that when members become involved in decision making they will be willing to implement the changes these decisions involve and thus potentially reduce resistance to change (Marrow, Bowers, & Seashore, 1967; Johansen, 1965). In his review of research studies related to participation in decision making, Melcher (1976) reported that participation in decisions sharply increased acceptance of decisions, and this was most dramatic when changes from traditional beliefs or habits were involved. Another advantage of the participative approach is that it increases the number of new ideas proposed; conversely, the nonparticipative approach restricts communication (Maier, 1970).

Collective decisions are typically made by members engaging in some type of voting. All members must abide by the decisions. Schein (1969) noted, however, that decisions made by majority rule are "surprisingly often" not well implemented even by the group that made the decision. For this he suggested two reasons.

1. The minority member often felt that there was an insufficient period of discussion for him to get his point of view across. Hence he felt misunderstood and sometimes resentful.

2. The minority member often felt that voting created two camps within the organization, and that he was now in a win-lose situation.

Schein suggested that decisions reached by consensus were quite effective. Here, participants believed that the communication processes and group climate had been such that each member felt he had had a fair chance to influence the decision process. There was no

formal voting on a decision but rather the feeling of the meeting is tested. "If there is a clear alternative which most members subscribe to, and if those who oppose it feel they have had their chance to influence it, then a consensus exists" (p. 56). Zaltman, Duncan and Holbek (1973) noted that if an issue were not considered settled, then the losing side might force the issue to the forefront again after a decision had been given a trial.

The collective decision process can facilitate the implementation of a decision, even if it slows the decision process, because it involves many individuals. Increased participation is likely to lead to commitment by members to working through some of the difficulties they might experience during the implementation (Marrow et al., 1967).

Collective decision processes in formal organizations must operate in coordination with authority structures. Authority structures influence collective decision procedures because collective decisions are reviewed and legitimized by the formal hierarchy of the organization. It has already been observed that school personnel operate within the authority structure provided by the position of the principal and by the districtwide bodies.

Organization Theory

Organization theory also was used to analyze the decision-making structures and processes established in the schools, since

it is concerned with centralization of decision making and the outcome of satisfaction with the decision making.

Centralization. Porter, Lawler and Hackman (1975) noted that one organization can be distinguished from another in terms of whether or not authority is concentrated among a small group of individuals at the very top of the structure or is widely dispersed among a number of different echelons and units such that these units have a relatively high degree of autonomy. Some organizations allocate power only to a few job occupants, while other organizations allow for much wider participation. The higher the level in the organization at which decisions are made, and the less participation in decision making that exists among personnel, then the greater the centralization (Hage and Aiken, 1970). Conversely, the higher the number of lower organizational incumbents who participate in decision making, then the less the centralization.

This concept was used in this study because the higher the degree of centralization then the lower the rate of program change (Hage and Aiken, 1970). Increased participation in the school situation has potential for bringing forward many diverse ideas for change; less participation does not. Decentralization leads to conflict in dealing with issues which is also likely to identify new areas for change. Zaltman, Duncan and Holbek (1973) pointed out that during the evaluation and initiation stages of the innovative process performance gaps are identified in the organization,

information needs are very high, and a high degree of authority is likely to restrict the channels of communication.

In this study, the degree to which decision-making power was centralized was determined by reference to the number of individuals, groups, and structures who had authority to make final decisions regarding the instructional program and day-to-day operational management of the school, as well as the frequency and level of participation of the members of the structures and groups.

The literature regarding the organization of traditional high schools suggested a typology of structures and groups for analyzing decision-making process of the schools in this study. First, there were the traditional intraschool structures and groups whose field of authority was buildingwide, e.g., the administrative staff--especially the principal--and cabinets of departmental chairpersons and other role incumbents, faculty and student committees. Additional buildingwide policy-making bodies, such as instructional improvement committees or program improvement councils, whose membership would be broadly representative of all personnel involved in the decision-making process (Klausmeier, 1977) were also included.

Second, there were the traditional structures and groups whose scope of decision authority was limited to a particular area, e.g., subject departments, guidance departments, and chairpersons.

In innovative schools, however, a variety of additional structures can exist, the intent of which is to reduce the scale of the administrative units and the decision-making process within them

so that the organization of the school is manageable and so that interaction and communication with others is enhanced. Such alternatives include learning communities, schools-within-the school, and teacher-advisor groups.

Third, there were the districtwide bodies and groups, e.g., the district office, school board, and members of the community served by the school. In literature about innovative schools little is said about such structures. An exception was Klausmeier (1977) who proposed a systemwide program committee composed of representatives of all people involved to coordinate the educational program of the district.

Regarding the participation of school personnel in the decision-making process, Lipham (1976) pointed out that any individual's participation may range from "none" to "total involvement." Another scale, from Wendlandt (1970), ranges from: 5, make the decision; 4, recommend an alternative; 3, develop possible alternatives; 2, provide information only; to 1, no involvement.

In the present study, questions were formulated utilizing these concepts to ascertain respondents' perceptions of the degree of involvement, from high to low, of school personnel in the decision-making process.

Satisfaction. The major outcome of decision participation should be staff satisfaction. While the social theorists such as Weber (1947) argues that a strict hierarchy of authority increases

efficiency and productivity, other theorists have argued that decentralization increases job satisfaction and reduces resistance to change (Coch and French, 1948). Offering individuals involvement, regardless of their level within the organization, should improve job attitudes (Vroom, 1959).

March and Simon (1958) found that job satisfaction was higher when there was autonomy in decision making--low centralization. Aiken and Hage (1966) also found that alienation from work, and alienation from expressive relations were more prominent in agencies characterized by a high degree of centralization.

Bridges (1967), in a review of participation studies in educational settings, stated that participation increases teacher level of satisfaction in teaching, enthusiasm for the school system, and positive attitudes toward the principal. Likewise, Fraser (1967) found that secondary teachers were least committed and satisfied in highly centralized school systems. Alluto and Belasco (1972) similarly found a positive relationship between involvement in decision making and satisfaction.

Professionals, because of their expertise, expect to have a voice in decisions which affect the working situation. The professional becomes dissatisfied if people make decisions which impact on work situation--particularly if this professional has no voice. Alternatively, the professional's satisfaction likely will increase if consulted before a decision is made.

In this study, satisfaction was assessed in terms of how decisions were made and the extent of participation in the process. Respondents' perceptions of the effectiveness of the decision-making process were also sought.

Significance of the Study

This study was designed to investigate the decision-making process in senior high schools which had implemented programs of individualized schooling.

Decision making is at the heart of the administrative process and the administrative and organizational arrangements which a school utilizes are of great consequence either for inhibiting or for facilitating program implementation. The evidence suggests that the programs of individualization are fostered by administrative and organizational arrangements which involve personnel in decision making. The schools presumably had developed administrative arrangements to facilitate this. It was not known precisely what such structures and processes were.

It was believed that this research would contribute to:

1. The identification of the relationship between change and the decision-making process.
2. Knowledge of alternative decision-making structures and processes which facilitate the implementation of change--in this study, individualized programs in senior high schools.

3. Guidelines for improving the decision-making process in organizations generally, and senior high schools, specifically.
4. Insights into theory development in organizational decision making.

Overview of the Study

This chapter included an introduction to the study, the theories and related supporting literature, statement of the problem, and the significance of the study.

Chapter II describes the design and methodology of the study. Chapter III presents the data for each school; Chapter IV analyzes the data across schools. Chapter V gives an overview of the study, the major conclusions, and implications for further research and practice.

CHAPTER II

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains a description of the design and methodology of the study. Included are seven sections: a brief treatment of the methodology utilized, a description of how the schools were selected, a delineation of the selected schools, an account of the development of the protocol, a description of the data collection methods, a delineation of the data analysis process, and a consideration of the limitations of the study.

Rationale for the Methodology Utilized

This study used the field study methods of interview, observation, and document analysis to describe the decision-making process in American senior high schools which are implementing programs of individualized schooling.

It was one of three companion studies conducted simultaneously over a four-month period, October 1977 to January 1978. Daresh (1978) investigated the interaction of extraorganizational and intraorganizational factors as they relate to the installation, maintenance, refinement, and routinization of programs designed to individualize schooling. Neiner (1978) studied the change strategies used to implement the programs of individualized schooling in senior high schools.

Kerlinger (1973) described field studies as "ex post facto scientific inquiries aimed at discovering the relations and interactions among sociological, psychological, and educational variables in real social structures." They are of two types: exploratory and hypothesis testing. Kerlinger identified three purposes for exploratory studies: "to discover significant variables in the field situation, to discover relations among variables, and to lay the groundwork for later, more systematic and rigorous testing of hypotheses" (1973, p. 406). Through this methodology it could be expected that important and recurring variables in the decision-making process could be identified and specified, thus allowing future theory building to occur. But exploratory research seeks "what is rather than predicts relationships to be found" (Katz, 1953, pp. 75-83). "Verificational studies that test the hypotheses formulated from the field studies are necessary to complete the process of theory building" (Lutz and Iannaccone, 1969, p. 117).

Thus, the findings of this study are viewed as a basis for conducting further empirical or experimental research in the area of the decision making in senior high schools which are implementing individualized programs.

Selection of Schools

Because this research was a field study, the schools are referred to as "selected schools," rather than a sample. Babbie (1975, p. 203) clarified this distinction as follows:

> The field researcher attempts to observe everything within his field of study, so in a sense, he does not sample at all. In reality, of course, it is impossible to observe everything. To the extent that the field researcher sees only a portion of what transpires then, that which he does observe is a de facto sample of all the possible observations that have been made.

Thus, the field researcher employs what Babbie (1975) referred to as a "purposive sample" wherein a selection is made of observations which, one believes, will yield the most comprehensive understanding of the subject under investigation.

The study was conducted in six senior high schools which had attempted to individualize schooling. Each school was considered if it met at least three of the following operational criteria derived from the list of program components for IGE/Secondary (Klausmeier, 1977):

1. The school had developed an administrative structure designed to facilitate its particular program of individualized schooling.

2. The school had an organization for instruction which provided for shared decision making (e.g., teachers from two or more subject areas met to plan student programs) and structures were in place which made it possible for teachers to meet regularly and cooperatively make decisions on daily instructional activities.

3. An instructional program had been planned with each student which contributed to attaining the school's and the students' specific objectives.

4. Appropriate curricular materials had been adopted or developed and used to promote student attainment of instructional and other objectives.

5. The school's curriculum and the students' programs had been improved through the use of systematic evaluation procedures which provide the data required for informed decision making.

6. Effective analyses, communication, and conflict resolution mechanisms between the school and the community existed

and were fostered by a planned program of home-school-community relations.

7. Out-of-school and other learning experiences related to the characteristics of the school population had been planned, implemented, and evaluated at district, school, and teacher-student levels.

8. Intellectual, technical, material and other support had been provided by the school district and other educational agencies serving teachers.

9. The instructional program was better understood and improved through continuous research and development inducted by school personnel and cooperating agencies.

Only senior high schools, including grades 9 through 12 were considered and selected. Each school had a reputation for having implemented three or more of the foregoing components of individualized schooling. Professional journals were examined, national and state agencies were contacted, and experts in the field of American secondary education were contacted for recommendations concerning senior high schools that might be appropriate for this study. In all, approximately 25 schools were identified as possible research sites.

Based on this list, telephone contact was made with each potential school. A telephone protocol (Appendix A) was used; first, to determine the number of operational criteria that were satisfied, and second, to determine the principal's receptivity toward participating in this research project. Abstracts which outlined the nature of the proposed research (Appendix B) were sent to all schools contacted. The list of schools was then narrowed to twelve.

Final decisions regarding the participating schools were based on the desirability of varying nature of the area (urban, suburban,

rural), geographic location (east, west, midwest, north, and south), and the size both of the districts and the schools. Small "alternative" schools, or "a school-within-a-school" were not considered suitable.

The six senior high schools finally chosen represented urban, suburban, and rural districts with student populations ranging from 3,000 to over 40,000 students. The schools were located in diverse geographic regions of the United States.

A return telephone call was made to confirm the school's selection and to schedule the research visits. Telephone contact was also made with the district's central office to make certain that the study had the approval of these agencies. The visit was scheduled so that the researchers could spend at least four school days at the selected site.

Descriptions of the Selected Schools

This section contains descriptions of each of the six schools included in the study. Table 2.1 gives an overview of pertinent background information for all six schools. This table is followed by a descriptive narrative for each school. It includes a description of the city and the district, a description of the school itself, an account of the program which implemented individualized schooling, details of the distinctive way in which the school has implemented its program, and a description of supporting agencies.

TABLE 2.1

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE SELECTED SCHOOLS

	A	B	C
AREA	Mid-sized city	Mid-sized city	Rural
STUDENTS IN DISTRICT	40,000	8,000	3,000
SCHOOLS IN DISTRICT	34 elementary 9 jr. h.s. 4 sr. h.s. 1 alternative	14 elementary 1 jr. h.s. 1 sr. h.s. (9-10) 1 sr. h.s. (11-12)	6 elementary 2 jr. h.s. 2 sr. h.s.
GRADE LEVELS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS	7-12	11-12	10-12
STUDENTS ENROLLED	1,900	1,500	750
ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL	5	10	3
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT TEACHERS	85	60	60
GUIDANCE COUNSELORS	4	6	3
SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR INITIAL PROGRAM PLANNING	Federal	Federal	State and District

TABLE 2.1 (Continued)

	D	E	F
AREA	Suburban	Suburban	Suburban
STUDENTS IN DISTRICT	11,000	25,000	12,000
SCHOOLS IN DISTRICT	11 elementary 2 middle 2 sr. h.s. 1 alternative	26 elementary 11 middle 8 sr. h.s	9 elementary 4 middle 4 sr. h.s.
GRADE LEVELS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS	9-11	9-12	9-12
STUDENTS ENROLLED	1,300	1,000	1,500
ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL	5	3	5
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT TEACHERS	60	50	55
GUIDANCE COUNSELORS	4	3	3
SOURCE OF FUNDING FOR INITIAL PROGRAM PLANNING	District	State and District	District

TABLE 2.1 (Continued)

	A	B	C	D	E	F
DISTRICTWIDE MINIMUM COMPETENCIES SPECIFIED	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SCHOOL-OBJECTIVE BASED INSTRUCTION	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SELF-PACED FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
FORMAL TEACHER-ADVISOR PROGRAM	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
SUBJECT DEPARTMENTS	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
A BUILDINGWIDE INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
TOTAL STUDENT BODY DIVIDED INTO SMALLER SUBGROUPS	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
SUBGROUPS	9	7	0	4	0	0
CURRENT AFFILIATION WITH A FORMAL LEAGUE/NETWORK OF SIMILARLY ORGANIZED SCHOOLS	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes

School A

City and district background. School A is located in a city of approximately 200,000 people. The city has some manufacturing activity, good transportation facilities, serves as the service center for the agricultural region which surrounds it, and is a major government center.

The socioeconomic background of the city is diverse, but the major portion of the population belong to the middle and upper-middle income brackets. There is a small minority population in the city: less than 7 percent of the population is Black, 2 percent is Native American, and 3 percent is Spanish surnamed.

The school district has a total enrollment of more than 40,000, There are 34 elementary schools, 9 junior high schools, and 4 senior high schools. There is also one alternative high school enrolling 300 students.

School description. School A enrolls 1,900 students in grades 7 through 12. There are 1,300 senior high school students (grades 10-12) and 600 junior high school students (grades 7-9). The school was the only one in the study which included junior as well as senior high school students.

The attendance area of the school is an upper income community, but is not the wealthiest of the attendance areas in the city.

The staff of the school is comprised of a principal, five assistant principals, an administrative assistant, four guidance counselors, and 85 teachers. One of the assistant principals serves as the principal of the junior high school.

The school building, erected in 1967, was designed prior to the adoption of the individualized program. It consists mainly of self-contained classrooms which are allocated to specific subject departments and grouped according to the departments.

Program history. The individualized program at School A has been in operation since 1973-74. Its initial development was supported through planning and implementation grants under Title III, E.S.E.A. It also received some conceptual support from /I/D/E/A/ Kettering to design its individualized program.

Individualized schooling. The philosophy of School A states, "the key to learning and to establishing a healthy learning environment is the interpersonal relationships between the student and his or her teachers." This statement is consistent with the goal of the district, "to provide the highest quality educational program, consistent with . . . the needs of the individual student."

To achieve these goals the school has made changes in its curriculum, teacher-student advisement programs, and administrative and organizational arrangements.

Curriculum. The school has individualized its curriculum by allowing students to select from a wide diversity of more than 300 course offerings. Although the majority of these courses are designed to be full semester (18 week) courses, there are also shorter term, quarter courses, available. Students may choose to take any of the courses at any time during their high school years, with the exception of those classes which are dependent upon sequencing (e.g., a student

may not take Algebra II without first completing Algebra I). The diversity of courses open to students is enhanced by the fact that the state in which the school is located has few graduation requirements for high school students.

School A has also initiated other curricular changes designed to meet the needs of individual students. One example is the use of independent study programs, or Cooperatively Planned Units which may be taken by students either inside or outside of the school.

The school allows students to select two specialized programs if their needs might be better met in non-traditional settings. One of these programs is a small "alternative" school-within-the-school with an enrollment of 35 seniors and juniors who prefer to receive their education in a different manner than that of the traditional environment of the larger school.

Another program option is a small, interdisciplinary, multi-period course available to about 60 sophomores who choose to take it.

Student evaluations are based on the criteria established by each teacher in his or her own course. The grading ranges from A through F, with "Pass/Fail" options also available in selected courses. There is no schoolwide attempt at evaluation based on performance objectives, although the staff was discussing a minimum competency policy proposed by the district during the researchers' visit to the school.

Teacher-student advisement program. The school has implemented a teacher-advisor program to improve relationships between teachers

and students. Each student selects a teacher to serve as an advisor with whom he or she may work in a close relationship for a period of three years (grades 10-12) to plan programs, to determine resource or curricular options that might be appropriate, and to increase communication with parents.

Administrative and organizational arrangements. The policy of School A states that an important way of developing an individualized school is to reduce the scale of its operations and form smaller units within the school. In order to increase intraschool communication the the school is divided into nine learning communities--six for the senior high and three for the junior high. Each learning community has a leader, approximately ten staff teachers from different subject departments, and one building-level administrator who serves as an "administrative facilitator." Students are associated with the learning communities only to the extent that they belong to the learning community in which their teacher-advisor serves. Since the number of students is different for each advisor, the number of students in each learning community also varies.

Learning community leaders, the principal of the school, parents, and students' representatives meet periodically as a program improvement committee. This organization is intended to be the ultimate schoolwide administrative and decision-making body.

Instruction in the school is organized through typical subject departments who have responsibility for developing courses in their subject areas. Departmental chairpersons meet regularly with the assistant principal (curriculum).

Support agencies. School A does not now belong to any organized league or network of schools. Although /I/D/E/A/ Kettering aided in the original planning and implementation of the individualized program, there is no continuing support relationship between the school and this external agency.

The school continues to receive some federal financial assistance from E.S.E.A. Title IV. These monies are allocated to aid in the evaluation process of a previous Title III grant under which the school operated during the first four years of its individualized program.

School B

City and district data. School B is located in an established city of approximately 50,000. The major industries are agricultural processing and storage, transport, and service industries. The city faces an economic problem in that some of the largest employers have recently departed, creating an unemployment rate of nearly 14 percent, one of the highest in the state. Thus, the socioeconomic status of the citizens ranges from near poverty to extreme wealth. The minority population of the city, comprising about 10 percent of the population, is Black.

The school district caters for 8,000 students in the 14 elementary schools, one junior high school (grades 7 and 8), the ninth and tenth grade high school, and School B for the eleventh and twelfth grade students.

School description. School B is a coeducational school enrolling 1,500 students in grades 11 and 12. The ninth and tenth graders

attend another building adjacent to School B, which has a completely separate administrative structure and mode of operation.

Since School B draws its enrollment from all areas of the school district, the socioeconomic status and ethnic balance of its students reflects the community distribution.

The staff of School B includes the building principal, an administrative assistant, six guidance counselors, and 60 teachers.

The building, which was constructed in 1973, was not specifically designed to accommodate the present educational program, but does facilitate the implementation of the school's philosophy. A basic tenet is that students should have a diversity of choices available, and the building's mix of self-contained classrooms and open-space areas provides many alternatives.

Program history. The individualized program at the school was implemented in its present form in 1973. Pre-program planning (1970 through 1973) and the implementation of the program were financed through the use of some district money and funds from E.S.E.A. Title III.

Individualized schooling. School B has adopted an educational program that emphasizes "learning by choice." The philosophy "recognizes the individuality of each participant," and is designed so that "each individual student may make realistic choices from a wide range of alternatives," and it recognizes "the value of differences rather than striving for conformity."

Curriculum. Although the programmatic thrust of School B is not directed specifically toward individualization of the curriculum,

nonetheless the philosophy which allows each student to select a learning environment which most closely matches his or her vocational needs and preferred learning mode does afford a program of individualized schooling.

There are six "schools" to which students and staff members are assigned according to their choice. Each school is characterized by an educational philosophy which is indicated by its name:

Schools	Enrollments
Special Education	150
Career	150
Work Study	100
Traditional	350
Flexible	450
Contemporary	300

Once a student has selected one of these schools (a process which normally takes place while enrolled in the tenth grade), he or she retains membership in that school unless a decision is made to change. An element of flexibility exists, since not every project is offered in every school, and students occasionally move to other schools for part of their daily schedules.

Depending upon the school which the student selects, other curricular features may include flexibility of student grouping (Contemporary School), independent study projects (Flexible and Contemporary Schools), and community learning experiences (Work Study, Career, and Special Education Schools). In each school there are courses of varying length (full year, semester or quarter) designated as full, half, or quarter credit courses.

Student evaluation is based on the student's attainment of course objectives, as determined by the individual classroom teacher. There is no unifying set of buildingwide or districtwide performance objectives. Grades range from A through F for all courses.

Teacher-student advisement program. Relations between students and teachers are personalized in two ways. First, counseling is available from the guidance counselors who are each assigned to a school. Second, the relatively small numbers of students and teachers found in each school permit an atmosphere wherein students have access to teachers throughout the day for purposes of either academic or personal advisement. Such interaction between teachers and students is evident in all of the schools.

Administrative and organizational arrangements. Directors are in charge of each of the schools. They teach a reduced schedule of classes while coordinating and managing the daily operations of their schools.

The directors meet with the building principal, his assistant, and the coordinator of a federally-funded project housed in the building, to form a schoolwide administrative council. The director of guidance and counseling also serves as a member of this body. Meetings are frequent although they are not scheduled on a regular basis.

There are no subject departments at School B. Instead, instruction is organized according to the schools which are considered to be autonomous structures within the building. Certain staff members have been designated as subject coordinators throughout School B. Their

function is to take care of the several managerial tasks normally associated with department chairpersons (inventory control, ordering textbooks, etc.), and to coordinate the courses taught in the different schools.

Support agencies. School B is not affiliated with any formal agency, league, or network of schools. It receives financial support from E.S.E.A. Title IVc. The purpose of these funds is to pay for the diffusion of the program throughout the state. The school has also been actively cooperating with the state university's teacher education program. However, this is the final year of that program.

School C

City and district background. School C is located in a town of 4,000. It is part of a countywide school district of approximately 15,000. Since the county's main source of income is agriculture, there are a great number of seasonal employees, hence the population fluctuates.

The principal industry of the county is agriculture and the processing of agricultural products. Another important industry is lumbering and the manufacture of wood products.

There are 3,000 students who attend six elementary schools, two junior high schools, and School C. There is also one K-12 school with 181 students which is somewhat geographically isolated from the other schools in the district.

The socioeconomic levels of the county range from the low incomes of farm and migrant workers to the wealth of the proprietors

of farms and processing plants. The racial minorities in the county include Spanish surnamed (5 percent of the population) and Japanese Americans (another 5 percent).

School description. School C is a coeducational, grades 10 to 12 school enrolling 750 students. Most of the students are white (90 percent) and come from rural backgrounds. There are also Mexican American and Japanese American students. The majority of the students come from the middle socioeconomic class, although there are some students who come from both the lower and upper ends of the socioeconomic range.

The staff of the school consists of a principal, two associate principals, three guidance counselors, and 60 staff members. The school employs a program of differentiated staffing, so the number on the staff refers to both certificated and classified persons.

The layout of the school building--a campus design--was an integral part of the total planning process of the schools' educational program in 1970. Classrooms in the main building, most of which are of open space design, surround the school's resource center.

Program history. Planning of School C's organization began in 1965. Implementation of the program, which began in 1970, was facilitated by the need to plan a new secondary school building to accommodate students due to a consolidation of the two high schools which served two former school districts.

Nearly all of the money necessary for planning and implementing the program came from the school district. Only about 1 percent came from an external funding agency, the state department of education.

The school has never been affiliated with any league or network of similarly organized schools. The conceptual design for the program came from personnel within the school and the district, or from temporary consultants.

Individualized schooling. The programmatic emphasis on individualized instruction derives from the belief that a school "must provide the opportunity for each student to realize his potential." This takes place if "each student learns as he learns best, and obtains worthwhile goals that are relatively valuable to both the student and society through a continuous set of learning experiences."

Curriculum. In order to individualize its program School C utilizes a number of components.

Each student chooses a cluster of course groupings appropriate for a chosen vocational preparation or college entrance requirement. Minimum competencies for all subject areas are determined by the state and district.

Courses are divided into learning units, each 15 hours long. Each unit specifies readiness requirements, behavioral objectives, specific, but diverse, learning activities and materials, and itemizes post study performance requirements. Learning units indicate minimum and advanced competencies, and embody flexibility of credits, opportunities for sequencing and self paced learning by each student.

When each student completes a unit he or she must decide whether to proceed to another unit in the same course or whether to begin another unit in another course. This decision is made in consultation

with the teacher-advisor and is facilitated by a computer managed scheduling system.

Student evaluations occur at the end of each unit and credit is awarded when the ability to meet the performance requirements is demonstrated.

Teacher-student advisement program. Each staff member serves as advisor to a group of students. The responsibility of the advisor is to assist his or her students in setting goals, guiding day-to-day decisions, providing motivation, and communicating with parents. The advisor is considered to be "the one person in the school who knows the individual student as a total human being." The advisor meets with the students daily.

Administrative and organizational arrangements. There are no single-subject departments in the school. Instead, there are areas which comprise teachers in related subjects. Thus Humanities includes language arts, modern languages, drama, and social sciences. An area coordinator is responsible for the several managerial tasks normally required of departmental chairpersons. Where four teachers work in one subject field, the group has a team leader.

Although those people handle day-to-day curricular tasks, the schoolwide policy regarding curriculum is determined by a committee comprising teachers and administrators elected for the purpose. No substantive changes or additions can be made to course offerings without the prior approval of this committee.

The principal and two assistant principals form a supervisory

management team with responsibilities for curriculum leadership as well as school management. They meet regularly with area coordinators and, less often, with team leaders to form an administrative cabinet.

Support agencies. The school does not belong to any formal network of schools and maintains no continuing relationship with any particular university. The only occasional financial assistance it receives from the state is to support consultants who aid the minimum competencies program. No other agency provides financial support.

School D

City and district data. School D is located in a planned suburban community. The city, which was incorporated in 1971, now has a population of 40,000, but it is anticipated that it will have at least 200,000 by 1985.

A high percentage of the residents work in other towns and cities in the region and travel considerable distances each day to and from work. There is also an industrial park within the city which provides some office and light factory work for residents.

The largest section of the population is rising middle class. A large percentage of these families have two incomes and a remarkably homogeneous socioeconomic level. Another section, less than 10 percent of the total population, are ranch workers--Spanish surnamed--who form the largest minority population.

The present school district took control of the existing schools in 1973. These included one high school and three elementary schools

which previously had been components of neighboring districts. Now there are 11,000 students in 11 elementary schools, two middle schools (grades 7 and 8), two senior high schools, and one alternative high school.

The projected increase in the municipal population is expected to increase enrollment in the district schools. The district plans to construct 18 new facilities (9 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, and 4 high schools) to house approximately 25,000 students by 1985.

School description. School D is presently an incomplete school. It began operations with only ninth grade students during the 1975-76 school year when classes were held in another building. Currently, it has 1,300 students in grades 9 through 11. There is a projected enrollment next year of 1,800 students.

Approximately 10 percent of the student body are from minority groups. Of those, 60 percent are Black, 30 percent are Spanish surnamed, and 10 percent are Oriental.

There are now 60 teachers, a principal, four assistant principals, and four guidance counselors. The administrative and counseling staff will be the same next year, but at least 20 teachers will be added.

The school building, completed only this year, follows a campus design. Separate buildings, each featuring a combination of open space and self-contained classroom arrangements, are allocated to the various subject disciplines. The building was designed concomitantly with the design of the school's educational program.

Program history. Throughout the short history of the school it has been affiliated with a state network of demonstration schools. Each of these schools has been designated as a school which is designed to address state legislation mandating the implementation of minimum competency instruction and personalized approaches to learning. The school receives some additional financial support from the state to maintain its program.

Individualized schooling. The school district is committed to provide learning experiences which accommodate wide variation in abilities and learning styles found in students and has developed performance objectives in different subject areas that must be met by each student (K-12). Schools and teachers across the district have wide latitude regarding how and when students are directed toward the objectives.

The staff of School D expresses the philosophy that each student has unique needs and that each student needs a close personal contact with an adult in the school to whom he can relate. The school has adopted curricula and teacher advisor programs and administrative and organizational arrangements to fulfill that philosophy.

Curriculum. There is a wide diversity of courses--over 150--from which a student may choose, although some courses require prerequisites. Each course is given a level of difficulty rating from one to five which allows students to determine courses appropriate to their interest and level. The length of each course is specified in terms of the number of quins (nine weeks) over which it extends and

students also are able to choose which quin is most suitable for them to begin the course.

The school lists minimum competencies required for graduation. Alternative learning activities are available for each competency. A student who does not demonstrate mastery of the minimum competencies is required to attend remedial programs.

Many courses are offered on a variable credit basis. A student may earn more or less than the usual number of credits for the class, depending on the extent to which he or she meets the specific, measurable course objectives. Students are evaluated (A through F) on the merits of the quality of the work, not on the number of objectives attained. They are permitted to remain in a variable credit course so long as may be necessary to earn full credit.

Teacher-student advisement program. Each staff member in the school is an advisor and each student has an advisor. With the exception of ninth graders during their first nine weeks in the school, students select the advisor with whom they meet daily.

The advisement program is designed so that each student can identify with one adult in the school who will assist him or her in assessing needs, selecting courses, setting long-range goals, and communicating student needs to the school as a whole. Advisors are the primary contact between the school and the parents.

Administrative and organizational arrangements. The advisor groups, each of which is comprised of a teacher and 20 to 25 students, form the four administration units of the school. Each unit is composed

of an interdisciplinary group of approximately 20 teachers and about 350 students. The four assistant principals are the designated leaders of the units and are responsible for evaluating staff members, dealing with student and teacher problems, and developing communication channels, in each of their respective units.

The primary decision-making body of the school is a program improvement committee which consists of parents, students, faculty and administrators. This body is concerned with deciding major policy issues. A budget advisory committee serves this committee in an advisory capacity.

There is also a student committee which not only handles student activities but has an active voice in operational and curriculum affairs.

Although there are no institutionalized subject departments as such, instruction is organized and planned by teachers in similar subject areas. Subject coordinators will be appointed.

Support agencies. The school, through the state department of education, serves in a cooperative relationship with seven other schools around the state. All of these schools are designed principally as demonstration sites for competency-based and personalized education programs. These programs, although not officially mandated at this time, are encouraged by the state, which gives additional financial assistance to high schools in the state which adopt similar programs.

Additional supportive relationships are maintained by the school with consultants from nearby universities. The district provides money for these frequently-used services.

School E

City and district background. School E is located in a recently developed planned community located between two major cities. The community is essentially a dormitory suburb with some light industry and a rapidly disappearing agricultural district.

The population is multiracial (approximately 60 percent is white and 40 percent is Black) and is mostly upper middle class, with a large number of professional families.

The school district has a total of 25,000 students enrolled in 26 elementary schools, 11 middle schools, and 8 senior high schools. The district is a large county-wide system so that, although most of its schools are located in the same urban area as School E, there are a number of rural schools.

School description. School E is a coeducational school with 1,000 students in grades 9 through 12, representing the same ethnic distribution found in the community.

The staff comprises a principal, an assistant principal, an administrative assistant, 3 counselors, 50 teachers, and 10 aides.

The building, while not designed specifically for the program it now houses has, with some remodeling, been able to meet the demands placed on it by the present curriculum. There are large open spaces which the faculties concerned have adapted to their requirements for individualizing programs. The learning center is close to the instructional areas. Faculty planning and work stations are located centrally and together. There are no long interminable hallways. Access to any part of the building is easy and open.

Program history. The conceptual plan for the school, developed in 1970, was generated by consultants. Some of the consultants were from the National Association of Secondary School Principals and subsequently the school became a member of a nationwide group of high schools which served as demonstration sites for innovative secondary practices under the auspices of the NASSP.

Financial support for the initial planning came from the district and the state department of education.

Individualized schooling. Since its beginning, the school has been committed to a program of individualized schooling and has continued to develop and modify its model as needs have become apparent. Initially it attempted to provide each student with an opportunity to make continuous progress through the curriculum by the use of various learning materials. The school has now altered that focus by providing for both individual and group oriented instruction since it was found that not all students were able to take advantage of the individualized instruction offered. The provision of group oriented instruction was in keeping with the ideal of providing for individual difference.

Curriculum. The present curriculum has a number of features which attempt to treat individual student differences.

First, the curriculum is non-graded. In some subject areas, multilevel courses are available which allow students to begin courses at whatever level of ability or interest is most appropriate for their needs. In other subject areas, multiactivity courses offer students

variety in the activities available to attain certain objectives. Some subject areas combine these two approaches.

All courses are "phased" so that students may select the appropriate level of a course, ranging from levels designed for students who need much personal help and attention in the basic skills, to college level courses, and to those where student interest and motivation is the only requirement.

Students not demonstrating a basic proficiency in reading, writing, and/or mathematics while they are in the middle school are required to take special classes when they enroll in School E.

Another program is designed to give the student an opportunity to pursue in depth an area of interest of his or her own choosing through an independent research study project. Vocational programs are offered off-campus.

Evaluation is done according to the extent to which students attain course performance objectives. Grades range from A through C. Students who do not achieve at least a C repeat material until they are able to achieve a passing grade.

Teacher-student advisement program. All teachers and the three administrators each act as advisors to approximately 25 students. Each advisor group meets daily and additional time is provided in the advisor's daily schedule for conferences with students. The advisor personally deals with each of his or her students and keeps track of student academic progress, attendance, and other matters.

Advisor groups are grouped together to form three clusters within the school, each under the supervision of one of the guidance counselors. Advisors refer students to the appropriate counselor if they are unable to solve a student's particular problem.

Administrative and organizational management. School E has a supervisory management team, led by the principal and consisting of the other administrators. Responsibility for curriculum leadership rests with the principal.

The school has no schoolwide policy-making body such as an instructional improvement committee. However, departmental chairpersons meet regularly with the principal to communicate, raise issues and recommend procedures.

Responsibility for the subject centered curriculum rests with the departments who have implemented the philosophy of individualized instruction in a manner which they perceive to be commensurate with the needs of the students and the demands of their discipline.

Support agencies. The school maintains its relationship with the National Association of Secondary School Principals mainly because of the building principal. No financial assistance is received from the Association.

School E and two other schools have been designated by the district as model schools for the purpose of demonstrating curricular, advisor, and staffing patterns to other schools in the district. Because of this designation, the school receives additional support from the district in the form of extra instructional and clerical aides, and financial support to allow the school to hire national consultants.

School F

City and district background. School F is located in a suburb of a major city. The locality is partly industrial and partly residential, with some heavy manufacturing and transport industry. Residents are either employed locally or in the diversified occupations of the neighboring city. The predominantly lower middle class population is mostly white; five percent is Black.

The school district, which is coterminous with the county, has a total enrollment of 12,000 students in nine elementary schools, four middle schools, and four senior high schools. There is also a community college operated by the district which offers a two year course of study applicable toward a Bachelor's degree.

School description. School F is a boys' senior high school with 1,500 students enrolled in grades 9 through 12. Nearly all of the students are white. A girls' school of comparable enrollment is located near by.

The staff comprises the principal, 4 assistant principals, 55 teachers, 3 guidance counselors, and 45 aides (including paid student teachers, instructional aides, and clerical aides).

The building consists of two sections, each designed according to different educational philosophies. The older section, constructed in 1963, consistes of self-contained classrooms and offices; the newer section, built in 1970, consists of large open spaces with some partial visual screening and some specialized areas for student testing, etc. A section of the building is allocated to specific subject departments.

Program history. The current educational program is the result of two distinct educational change periods. The first period, from 1968-70, was marked by attempts at team teaching and interdisciplinary approaches to the instruction. The current program emphasizes continuous progress and was implemented as the result of a districtwide commitment to a K-12 continuous progress project begun in 1969. The school received additional financial support from the district throughout its changeover to the present program.

The school was also affiliated with the National Association of Secondary School Principals during its history. This organization provided no financial support--only expertise in the form of a number of consultants who visited the school frequently during its planning stages.

Individualized schooling. The continuous progress program implemented by the school was mandated by a districtwide policy. The program is intended "to eliminate grade levels and to provide individual students with opportunities for continuous progress without failure."

Curriculum. Course offerings are comparable to those in most other schools and certain vocational courses are available at nearby vocational educational centers.

The district provides course guidelines which establish minimum competencies and suggest course content and methodologies. The school organizes instruction into nine-week courses, although students are encouraged to complete them earlier if they can, and they are not

required to complete them within any prescribed time. Each course is developed in a number of learning packages which indicate the appropriate grade level; outline the purpose of the unit, objectives to be achieved, subject matter to be covered, activities and materials to be used; and indicate the required performance tests. Instruction may occur in large group presentations, in small study groups or in independent study. Each student's progress may differ regarding the rate at which one learns and the time one spends at various grade levels. Thus, he plans and revises his flexible schedule on a daily basis.

When a student has completed a unit or has reached a point where he must wait for the next group activity, he may move to another subject area and either complete a unit or begin a new one. A unit is completed when he takes the appropriate test which is used for evaluation purposes. Grades which range from A through F, with I (Incomplete) also a possibility, and progress reports are distributed at the end of each quinmester.

Teacher-student advisement program. Each student is assigned to a teacher-advisor who functions as advisor to approximately 35 students on a daily basis throughout their four years at the school. The function of the program is to establish a close relationship between teacher and student, to maintain an up-to-date information record, to plan the student's program, to monitor his achievement, to assist with the flexible scheduling, and to increase communication with parents.

Administrative and organizational arrangements. A number of formal structures and role responsibilities facilitate the administration and organization of the school.

The principal maintains responsibility for the overall educational leadership and administration of the school, although specific areas are delegated to the four assistant principals.

There is no buildingwide instructional improvement committee, and neither the parent association nor the student organization is involved in policy making.

The school is strongly departmentalized. Each group of teachers, led by a departmental chairperson, has responsibility for implementing the school and district's philosophy of continuous progress and individualized instruction in their own subject areas. They develop and maintain courses, devise teaching methods, materials, and design evaluation procedures.

The departmental chairpersons meet with the principal, at which time there is an exchange of information, issues, and attitudes regarding the school's curriculum and operating procedures. The principal communicates directives from the central office as well as his own, and there is opportunity for problems to be discussed along with proposed solutions.

In lieu of full faculty meetings, the principal and his assistants meet regularly with each department. This is done to promote a more productive flow of discussion than would be possible in a large group setting.

Support agencies. School F maintains a close relationship with six other schools around the country which were once affiliated with the National Association of Secondary School Principals. The

relationship allows the schools to share common concerns regarding the implementation of their individualized programs. The central office provides the necessary funds for such travel.

Protocol Development

The data were gathered for this study through the use of interviews, observations, and content analysis. In terms of actual instrumentation as a device for gathering the data, two forms were used: a telephone interview protocol (Appendix A) and an interview protocol (Appendix C) which was used in the schools.

Prior to the pilot study, only the telephone interview protocol was in a refined state. This instrument was intended to allow the researchers to determine what sorts of programs were actually in place in the senior high schools which had been, until that time, identified solely on a reputational basis.

The telephone interview protocol was developed in such a way that, although the researchers suggested program elements that might have existed in the schools, there was also ample opportunity provided for the principal to give an open-ended description of what he or she thought were the major program components in the school. This was important in that it permitted the researchers to consider operationalizations of individualized education which were not part of their original notions of the subject.

The following section describes the pilot study during which time the development of the interview protocol was begun. Next, there

are descriptions of that instrument and of the respondents and an explanation of how the protocol was implemented in the selected schools.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted at one senior high school which appeared to conform to the operational criteria for individualized schools. Katz (1953, p. 83) cited three purposes for a pilot study:

> 1) to develop the procedures for applying the research instrument so that, for example, the scale or schedule can be used effectively with respect to the time it takes to administer, 2) to test the wording of questions so that they are suited to the understanding of the audience, and 3) to ensure, as far as is practical, that the specific questions or observations are really getting at a variable for which a measure is needed.

The greatest emphasis in the pilot study centered on Katz' second purpose, "to test the wording of questions so that they are suited to the understanding of the audience." Since there was no pretested instrumentation used by the research in this first school, only questions which were gleaned from the literature or based on the researcher's own experiences were used. The process therefore served as a way in which vague questions could be clarified and helped the researcher to articulate his questions so that they could be used as the basis for a more structured interview protocol in subsequent schools.

Through this process, the basic research question:

> What are the decision-making structures and processes utilized in senior high schools which are implementing programs of individualized schooling?

was broken down into a series of questions as follows:

What is the philosophy which underlies the decision-making structures and processes of the schools?

What structures have been established?

What is the involvement of personnel in decision making?

What organizational processes are utilized?

What value do school personnel attach to the structures and processes?

The pilot study was conducted by the three researchers interviewing, observing and analyzing documents. Frequent discussions were held among them for the purpose of comparing their perceptions of the data.

All questions and responses were recorded using mini-cassette tape recorders. After the pilot study, the questions and answers were reviewed so that a modified content factor analysis could be performed on the material to ascertain precisely which questions elicited the most comprehensive answers relating to the purposes of the study. The questions which were judged as the most relevant and inclusive were then used to construct the interview protocol used throughout the research.

Interview Protocol

The interview protocol was intended to provide a framework for the collection and analyses of data concerning the decision making process in the senior high schools which were implementing programs of individualized schooling.

There were five basic questions:

1. From your experience and perspective, what is the policy which underlies the decision making in the school?
2. What are the structures used?
3. What part do school personnel play in the decision-making process?
4. What are the organizational processes used?
5. What are the elements of the process you like most and what elements do you like least?

Other questions were asked during each interview when probing was required. They were of two distinct types. The first asked for clarification of vague or incomplete statements by the respondents. They were asked to provide evidence, give an example, or to further spell out the meaning of the point they were making. In this manner more specific answers were obtained and a more accurate description gained. The second type sought each respondent's estimation of the worth of the school's decision-making policy and its implementation. These probes were not confined to the last of the research questions.

Respondents

Interviews were conducted with respondents who held various roles within the schools. A selected stratified sample was drawn from principals, assistant principals, counselors, heads of sub-schools and learning communities, departmental chairpersons, teachers, substitute teachers, and aides (including student teachers, aides and clerical

staff). The departmental personnel and teachers were drawn from the several subject areas in the curriculum and reflected the sex and age ratios and length of tenure which was found among the staff. As a result of this mix of respondents in each school, and across the schools, it was hoped that a full description of the decision-making processes and a multiperspective view of personnel attitudes toward them might be obtained.

The specific procedures used in the interview process are described more fully in the following section along with a description of other methods used to collect the data for the study.

Data Collection

The exploratory nature of this study required that a methodology be used which enabled as many important variables as possible to be identified and investigated, and the relationship among them discovered. Information beyond that which had been identified in advance had to be sought.

Each of the six schools was investigated simultaneously by the three researchers over a period from three to six days' duration.

Visits were scheduled over the four-month period of October through January. During each visit, formal and informal interviews and observations were conducted and documents were collected and analyzed.

Interviews

In addition to the basic interview questions which have already been listed and explained, the interview protocol also contained a section which sought basic demographic data about each respondent. This information provided a profile of each individual in terms of age, sex, and teaching experiences. A copy of the total interview protocol is included as Appendix C of this report.

The introduction to each interview followed the sequence of procedures recommended by Cannell and Kahn (1953, p. 354):

1. The purpose and objectives of the research were explained.
2. The method by which each respondent was selected was described.
3. The agency with which the researcher was affiliated was identified.
4. The anonymous and confidential nature of the interview was assured.

In addition, each person interviewed was given an explanation for and asked to sign the Informed Consent Form (Appendix D) as required by the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This form is meant to assure the protection of any person from being exposed to risk in any project supported by the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The formal interviews were scheduled for one hour periods, but in fact ranged in duration from 25 minutes to nearly three hours. The interview protocol was used with each person, but allowances were

made for divergent but related discussions and rephrasing of questions occurred where necessary (Kerlinger, 1973).

Answers to the interview questions were written on field note pads. Tape recorders were also used as one more way to preserve information and precise statements made by the respondents. Iannaccone (1977) noted that the use of such mechanical devices was acceptable in field methodology so long as the recorder was unobstructive and the respondent knew in advance how to control the "on-off" switch.

The researchers also discussed various interviews after each day in the school, comparing notes and listing any new probing questions deemed necessary. Complementary information from each researcher's notes was shared and recorded.

Informal interviews took place in many situations with many different people when the opportunity arose. Notes of the discussions that transpired were generally recorded in writing at a later time.

On a number of occasions, the researchers were sought out for further discussion by different members of the staff. This motivation to discuss further the topics covered in the interview was described by Cannell and Kahn (1953, p. 357) as follows:

> Such motivation sometimes occurs because the interview offers the respondent the opportunity to talk about topics in which he is interested but usually do not obtain adequate expression. . . . the respondent obtains satisfaction from talking with a receptive, understanding interviewer about something in which he is interested and in which he is involved.

Perceptions gained at such times were valuable in that open communication allowed for a free flow of ideas.

Observations

Observations were made of all meetings conducted within the schools during the researchers' visits. These included faculty meetings, subschool meetings, principals' and assistant principals' meetings, the school board, etc. Members of the meetings observed were made aware of the researchers' purposes prior to the meeting time. The point was emphasized that objective rather than evaluative data were being recorded and that it was hoped that the meetings would be conducted in the usual manner with no changes made because of the researchers' presence.

Special precautions were made to keep the observation activities from interfering with meetings, as suggested by Heynes and Zander (1966). These included sitting as far away from the group as space permitted, avoiding conversations during the meetings, and repressing any reaction that might have conveyed an attitude concerning the activities of the meeting. Every attempt was made to appear non-threatening to the groups observed.

When possible, meetings were recorded on tape. This procedure was helpful in that notes could be taken with regard both to the researchers' general impressions of the proceedings and to the substantive issues which were being discussed. The researchers took field notes regarding the conduct of the meeting and the behavior of the participants while comments and statements relating to agenda items were mechanically recorded.

Analysis of Documents

Minutes and agendas of meetings, program descriptions, courses of study, school newsletters, learning packages, and any other pertinent documents that were available were collected at each school. These data were considered valuable in that they provided a record of events collected by persons other than the investigator and took in a "natural" social setting (Angell and Freedman, 1953). McCall and Simmons (1969, pp. 322-323) noted:

> Often such documents are superior to informants in that official reports and statistics cover sectors of the organization beyond the sphere of the particular informant, are based on regularized procedures often under external audit, and are more precise than the informant's memory.

The documents that were collected and analyzed gave some historical perspective to the operation of the schools and districts.

As McCall and Simmons (1969, p. 63) warned, however, "documentary surrogates for informants . . . are usually incomplete, unsystematic, and tantalizing but tangential." This proved true during the collection of data and content analysis. In many cases, schools did not distribute comprehensive documents and group meetings did not provide minutes or agenda. If such was the case, the omission was noted and the implications were sought.

The analysis of documents tended to serve several purposes:

1. Reviewing the documents provided an historical perspective of the activities of the high schools.
2. The data provided insights into what information was distributed and how it was communicated to the staff,

the public, or subsystems within each.

3. Systems of data maintenance were noted so that priorities and methods of communication reflected by these documents could provide information concerning the operations of each school.

Any discrepancies and unique events that occurred were recorded for further questioning.

Analysis of the Data

Lutz and Iannaccone (1969) noted that in a field study, data gathering and analysis take place simultaneously. This was amplified by Bollins and Marshall (1973, p. 61) as follows:

> Analysis seeks to discover the components of a phenomenon, the basic elements that underlie and explain a complex changing issue. It can entail, for example, finding relations between parts, comparing parts, seeing patterns, and discovering inconsistencies and gaps. Analysis sifts the evidence to find basic elements.

The study data were analyzed by extracting important and recurring information related to variables believed to be important to the investigation. Thus, the data "are classified in some systematic fashion so they can be examined together to see what they look like collectively" (Brandt, 1972, p. 189). This process of analysis had the objective of converting "raw" phenomena into data which could "be treated in essentially a scientific manner so that a body of knowledge can be built up" (Cartwright, 1966, p. 435).

Although no overarching theory adequately explains the decision-making processes in senior high schools, there are constructs which are borrowed from a number of other theoretical bases which serve to explain the phenomena witnessed by the researchers in the field. The interview questions were also based on many of the same theoretical foundations. Thus, data gathering and analysis operated simultaneously. When major variables were determined and found to relate to all schools, the data for each variable were presented and analyzed in categories that appeared in the broader context of the major theories which lent their construct definitions to the study.

The raw data for each variable were examined for each school and across schools according to the responses of the personnel both inside and outside of the school, and from the field notes, documents, and observations of the researchers. Propositions were deduced and anecdotal comments and descriptions to support them were recorded. Finally, general statements were made about the variables being investigated.

Next, the raw data were again examined to determine the decision-making processes, actual and ideal, which influenced the implementation of individualized schooling. These data were recorded with supporting descriptions and anecdotal comments before a concluding general statement was written. Finally, the data were investigated within and across schools so that important relationships could be investigated and those additionally discovered could be documented in this study.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of the study centered around the fact that representativeness was questionable as a result of the few cases that were under consideration. This number does not allow for valid generalizations to other population until specific hypotheses are stated and proper sampling methods are used so that these hypotheses can be tested (Isaac and Michael, 1971).

The second limitation dealt with the researchers' susceptibility to bias in accurately reporting and analyzing what was seen (Lutz and Iannaccone, 1969, p. 117).

A third related limitation was the possibility that inaccurate information was given to answers in the interviews because of a variety of personal concerns that the respondents might have had. These concerns might have been reflected in changed behavior rather than typical behavior on the part of those being interviewed and observed.

The fourth limitation was related to the lack of a central, unifying definition of individualized schooling. Each of the schools studied had different operational definitions of this concept. As the result of not having a general model for purposes of analysis, comparability across all six schools was difficult.

A fifth limitation involved the differences in time phases of the change process taking place in the six schools. Some of the schools were just starting their individualized programs, some had had their programs developed for several years, some were in a refinement phase, and others had individualized programs which were in the stage

of decline, or retrenchment. Such differences in the time phases of the programs made it exceedingly difficult to make generalizations across all schools.

A sixth limitation of this study centered on the timing of the data collection in the schools. Specific problems that evolved at the time that the researchers were in the schools may have caused atypical pattern of behavior and responses.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION OF DATA

The chapter contains a description of each school's progress in the change process, administrative structures and groups involved in its decision-making process, the centralization and routinization of the decision-making process, and staff satisfaction with the decision-making process. First, the change stage of the innovative process reached by each school at the time of the study is described. Second, each of the administrative structures and groups is treated, including descriptions of the membership, leadership, functions, and underlying values which guided them; the location of each in the administrative hierarchy; and staff perceptions of the value of each structure and group. Third, an overview of the decision-making process is presented in terms of the following variables: centralization, routinization, and satisfaction.

School A

Decision making at School A is described in terms of the change stage of the innovation, the administrative structures and groups, the centralization of decision making, the routinization of decision making, and staff satisfaction with decision making.

Stage of Program Change In School A

School A was in the eighth year of a change process to implement a program of individualized schooling. During the years 1970 through 1975, the innovative process had passed through the evaluation, initiation, and implementation stages. The program had not been fully implemented nor reached the routinization stage because it did not have total faculty acceptance or compliance.

At the end of the 1975-76 school year, the principal, who had been the major change agent, resigned. His successor instituted a year-long "program of reassessment" which was intended to determine where the program was not accomplishing its goals as effectively as it might. A task force of teachers had been established to ascertain staff opinion and create a set of "we agree" statements which were intended to establish school goals and provide a philosophic basis for decision making, including such ideas as the following:

> Students learn at different rates, in different ways, and in different learning environments.
>
> Consideration should be given to parents' ideas in the decision-making process of the school.

The instructional program continued to include a wide diversity of course options, semester- and quarter-length courses, flexibility of course scheduling throughout the student's enrollment at the school, and a number of special programs, such as cooperatively planned units for independent study, an education by career

experience program, and an alternative program for students having exceptional educational needs.

All staff were required to participate in the student advisement program which hitherto had been a voluntary expectation for teachers. Furthermore, the principal had initiated steps to implement certain decision-making structures and processes of the original innovative program. The "painful reorganization" included a reactivation of the program improvement committee--along with increased importance attached to its decision-making authority. The learning communities were reduced in size of membership and increased in number; they met more regularly and their functions were significantly re-emphasized as important structures in the decision-making process. Learning community leaders were paid or were given released time and they met regularly with the principal. Attempts to reach decision by consensus rather than by majority voting were also incorporated into the decision-making process.

Resistance to the implementation of these innovations was high among some of the faculty members who not only opposed their implementation but also felt that changes had occurred without adequate consideration by the staff. At the time of the study the innovative process was in the reimplementation stage. Resistance and disequilibirum were high as sources of resistance were encountered.

The Administrative Structures and Groups in School A

The administrative structures and groups in School A included: the administrative staff, faculty meetings, task forces, subject departments, learning communities, the program improvement committee, the community advisory committee, the student council and district-wide bodies.

Administrative Staff

The administrative staff consisted of the principal, who retained ultimate authority for the educational leadership and management of the school; five assistant principals, each of whom had been assigned an area of responsibility, such as vice principal, instruction, student services, athletics, the junior high school program; and an administrative assistant. They met regularly and informally as occasions warranted. Each assistant principal served as an "administrative facilitator" at learning community meetings.

The decision-making values of the principal significantly influenced the operation of the administrative staff and the decision-making structures in the school. The first value was as many people as possible should be involved in the process. Increasingly, decision making should be shared with the program improvement committee and the learning communities.

Second, within each of the structures, final decisions should be made only after there had been an attempt to reach consensus.

While this was not always expected, it was preferable to decisions being made by faculty voting, because some, the minority, often remained dissatisfied.

Third, decisions were best made at the building level and in relation to the buildingwide goals. Hence, a set of "we agree" statements had been compiled as a basis for decision making.

Fourth, while planning was a staff function, it had to occur within the parameters that had been established by the school and the district.

Fifth, responsibility for implementation was a major expectation held for the administrators.

Sixth, continuous articulation of policy was preferable so that continued improvement would occur gradually and not dysfunctionally.

Seventh, administrators had the responsibility, which they could not abdicate, to initiate change where they perceived it to be needed.

Some teachers felt that "shared" decision making involved the necessity for reaching a decision about which everyone could agree. The principal and others did not hold this view.

> Sometimes decisions have to be made by administrators. All decisions cannot be "shared" in the sense that we don't make one until all agree. So what we try to do is have as many people as possible give input, information, ideas, suggested solutions. We try to reach consensus. But if we can't, then we have to decide.

Faculty Meetings

Full faculty meetings each month functioned primarily to communicate directives and information from the district office and the building administrative staff. Issues raised by both the faculty and the administrative staff were also discussed.

The total faculty meeting was generally seen as too large and the time available too short for adequate consideration of issues. To overcome this problem two structures were utilized, ad hoc task forces and learning communities.

Task Forces

Membership on a task force typically consisted of six to eight people, usually volunteers, who were interested in a particular issue. Task forces were established in response to a felt need for a recommendation about matters such as scheduling, articulation with other schools (which had been raised at faculty meetings), learning community meetings, etc. Members gathered information from other faculty, considered alternative solutions, and made final recommendations.

Task forces were perceived to have advantages as decision-making structures. They were occasional, were required to make recommendations about only one issue, and, being specific, were limited in duration. Thus, faculty members were more willing to become involved than they were in the affairs of regular committees. Another perceived advantage was that discussion could occur within

a small group setting, so that all viewpoints and alternatives could be raised and explored.

Task force recommendations had never been rejected by the majority of the faculty or by the principal. Among some staff members, however, there was a resentment first, that task forces did not always appear to recognize divergent views, and second, that task forces were established to address issues and make recommendations about innovations which they felt were unnecessary. A prevalent impression was that a task force was sometimes set up to legitimize an innovation favored by the principal.

Subject Departments

The traditional subject department structure and chairpersons had been retained at School A. Within each subject area, the department was responsible for course development, instruction, textbook selection, student assessment procedures, space utilization, budgetary allocations, etc. Departmental chairpersons also were consulted regarding the hiring of teachers.

The subject departments were very influential in the decision-making process. Responsibility for course initiation rested with the individual teachers whose proposals were first discussed with other subject teachers and the departmental chairpersons. The assistant principal for instruction placed much confidence in the judgment of department chairpersons who monitored course proposals before they were sent to him for approval. He stated, "If it's

approved by the department I know that it is probably good when it comes to me."

Department chairpersons met regularly with the assistant principal for instruction to decide on curriculum-related matters, such as course requirements, teacher assignments, space allocation, scheduling, etc. This group was perceived to be quite influential in the decision-making process.

> It has worked very well. Subject teachers express their feelings and wishes not only in department meetings but during the informal contact that occurs within each departmental area. These are transmitted to the department chairpersons' meeting. Then we all know what the staff is thinking. We can recommend policy, and in curriculum matters we have been very effective.

Learning Communities

Staff at the senior high school were grouped into six learning communities. Each consisted of nine to twelve staff teachers from different subject fields and a building level administrator who served as the "administrative facilitator." Each learning community elected its own leader who was either reimbursed or given some released time. Leaders met monthly with the principal and also represented their communities on the program improvement committee.

Students were associated with learning communities only to the extent that they belonged to the particular learning community in which their teacher-advisor served. Students chose their own teacher-advisor--some teachers had as few as seven advisees, others had as many as thirty. Consequently, the number of students in

each learning community varied, but generally, about 200 students were associated with each community.

The intention that learning communities should be groups of students and teachers with the similar educational interests, e.g., a college bound orientation, had not yet evolved. Teachers, however, were grouped according to the similarity of their educational philosophies. As one teacher pointed out, "The student community is not organized according to their interests. The way we have it now we are meeting teachers' needs--not students' needs."

The learning community structure facilitated two functions: (1) the teacher-advisor program, and (2) teacher involvement in decision making. Time was scheduled each day for teacher-advisors and students to meet for communication of announcements and the like and for students who elected to do so, to visit with their advisor for the purpose of selecting and registering for courses and for obtaining advice on personal concerns.

Opinions regarding the program varied. Some thought it facilitated the decision-making process by making teachers more aware of their clients.

> The system has helped teachers to realize that their responsibilities go beyond the subject area. Hence, they are more responsible to the needs of their students when issues are raised [in the learning communities and faculty meetings]. Hostility of teachers to parents is reduced. When the "community" opinion is expressed teachers know who the "community" is.

Some regretted that so few students met with their teacher-advisors for personal guidance; that the school did not commit more resources, i.e., paid time and training, to encourage teachers to accept the role readily; and that a large number of teachers was was not committed to the program.

Some felt they were not equipped for the role.

> I don't have the "people skills" for "humanistic advising"; neither have I had any training. My disaffection for the program is due to the fact that I am being asked to do a job I did not expect to do when I started [teaching] and I don't think I should be expected to now. I am a teacher, not a counselor.

These teachers, as well as others not committed to the program, also regretted the loss of instructional time.

> Teachers value their discipline. If you want staff acceptance of the idea of advising, then you must make time, i.e., by taking it from their class time. If you do, there is a negative feeling. Teachers place a high value on their discipline.

Learning communities not only facilitated the teacher-advisor program; they also provided a mechanism for ensuring quality teacher input into the decision-making process which was not possible in a full staff meeting of 120 people and which was not confined to the narrower perspectives of the subject department meetings. The intention was that learning communities would become structures through which teacher concerns and opinions could be conveyed to the program improvement committee and, in turn, serve as avenues of communication of that committee's policy.

Members of learning communities met each month to discuss policy and operational matters relating to the organization of the

school, e.g., time schedules, graduation requirements, help required for part-time teachers, and the teacher-advisor system. Instructional matters were only raised occasionally, viz: one department had shared its objectives statement with members of learning communities; an interdisciplinary course for sophomores had gained impetus through discussion in learning communities; and district initiative to establish a minimum competencies program had been directed in the first instance to learning communities for discussion, not to subject departments. It was generally felt that it would be "a long way down the road before the learning communities originate courses. Subject departments decide the curriculum." Although learning communities had not yet functioned as was intended and the objectives set for them had not been fully achieved, they were beginning to make small but significant contributions to the decision-making process.

First, some teachers had begun to recognize each others' expertise, and rapport was developing. As one said, "When teachers are put together, individuals can only do their own song and dance act for so long--there are small but significant signs of cooperation."

Second, some teachers, to varying degrees, were beginning to focus on the total needs of their students, not just on their intellectual development in one subject area.

> The learning communities have helped the teachers grow. Many were departmental isolates and limited.

> Now they interact with teachers from all of the other subject fields. This has broadened their viewpoint.

Third, decision making within the subject departments was less insular. Their goals and practices were now more visible and could be subject to scrutiny by all staff members.

Fourth, the opportunity for teachers to raise issues, express their views and "exchange their gripes" in the small-group setting of the learning community was beginning to reduce the sense of powerlessness which some people had felt when there were no learning communities or when they were too large for adequate interaction among the members.

Fifth, creation of the learning community leader position had fostered emergent leadership.

Some teachers regretted what they perceived to be an "invasion of the subject department's domain." While they acknowledged that the effect of the entire staff considering curriculum matters might be valuable for some departments, "a department can become stagnant; it may not be bad for some people to look at what we do," they thought that a curriculum issue ought to be a departmental matter, in consultation with the principal, so that standards could be maintained.

> The department can take a good strong look at courses. The department chairperson can monitor standards. I would prefer curriculum decisions to be made by the department, not the learning communities, because I fear that there will be a leveling of what is now a strong school to a level of mediocrity.

Others thought the new structures and processes had "confused" the traditional decision-making structures, and that the traditional relationships no longer existed.

> It is eroding the departmental structure. I used to know the process. I knew what was what. Existing relationships have been upset. We were getting along well before, doing the best possible things for kids. There was a system we operated. The added layer has gotten in its way. For instance the departmental chairmen could have worked out the minimum competencies program.

Teachers who thought that learning communities did make a worthwhile contribution to the decision-making process were not displeased at the loss of instructional time; some of them wanted more time for the learning community program. Those who did not value highly their involvement in the decision-making process resented the loss of instructional time.

The Program Improvement Committee

Membership of the program improvement committee consisted of two parents elected by the parent committee, three students who were leaders of the student association, learning community leaders who represented the faculty, and administrators. The principal was chairman.

At the time of the study, the committee met irregularly although the expectation of the principal was that it would meet weekly as it began to function effectively, and that other decision-making structures would meet less frequently as their functions were assumed by the committee. His intention was that the committee

should ultimately make all the major policy decisions relating to curriculum, the learning environment, and student management because "policy ought to be made first at the building level."

The committee had not yet met this expectation. At the time of the study it was concerned only with day-to-day operational matters, such as the school schedule and calendar. It did not discuss instructional matters. Opinions regarding the effectiveness of the program improvement committee varied.

Some valued it because of the potential it possessed for the representation of staff opinion on the policy-making body. As one teacher said, "The fact that I can have a say, however indirectly, in the policy making of the school through that committee--even in things like grading and attendance--is important to me."

Others rejected its worth. They saw no need for such a policy-making committee and questioned its capacity to achieve the goals set for it. They regarded it as "just a public relations gimmick."

> Supposedly, the program improvement committee runs the school. But it hasn't affected the importance of the department chairmen's committee. It will be a long time before it will. The principal still makes all the major decisions.

The low value which some members of the committee gave to their representative function was manifest when several chose to attend other meetings related to their own subject areas, or to coach athletic teams, rather than attend committee meetings.

Still others questioned the credibility of the committee's decisions. They felt that these were times when issues they thought important were not considered or were given little consideration. They felt that some members of the committee were more influential than others and that there were times when "the shared decision-making concept does not always work."

The Community Advisory Committee

Although membership was open to all citizens, the community advisory committee regularly consisted of 15 to 20 parents. Members elected their own chairman and met ten times a year. The function of the committee was to advise the principal on all matters relating to the school, including the curriculum. At the time of the study, parents were discussing a proposal for establishing districtwide minimum competency objectives. Parent representatives from this body were nominated to the program improvement committee.

The Student Council

Membership on the student council consisted of representatives elected by the student body. Its function was to assist with the administration of student activities. It was not concerned with curricular issues. Representatives of this group attended meetings of the program improvement committee.

School Board and District Office

The school board and district office traditionally had given local schools much autonomy and encouragement to innovate. District office initiatives at the time of the study, however, had begun to limit building decision making. Districtwide goals were currently under review.

> The district is more centralized than it was. The curriculum is more centralized and it has been made clear that policy is made at the central office--the role of the school is to deliver the curriculum services.

Proposed new courses and course changes were discussed with district consultants and submitted to the superintendent's office for confirmation. No respondent felt this was a constricting requirement.

> The norm is that you seek approval. If there were a negative reaction, the school would not go ahead. I can't think of an instance where it has happened. Modifications have been suggested and they usually appeared to be wise. The district office still supports innovation.

Other respondents cited examples of the district office overriding building decisions because they conflicted with districtwide policies in such areas as out-of-district travel for outstanding students, paid conference time, teacher-pupil ratio, class sizes, etc. They felt that the freedom of the school to make its own decisions was being curtailed as part of a policy that the school should conform to the practices of the other schools in the district.

Centralization of Decision Making in School A

Notwithstanding his stated intention to share the decision making at School A with as many people as possible and the implementation of structures designed to facilitate this, the principal set the parameters within which the decisions might be made and retained the right to make final decisions.

Regarding curricular decisions, course proposals raised by teachers were first approved by departmental chairmen who in turn sought the approval of the assistant principal for instruction. If he did not approve there would be a "strong dampener" on the proposal and it would be returned for reconsideration. If he agreed or did not disagree strongly, the proposal would go to the principal and "be settled" there. Course proposals were not submitted to the program improvement committee. Within the classroom, instructional matters such as choice of materials, classroom management, teaching methods, evaluations and grading were the prerogative of the individual teacher.

Regarding other decisions, establishment of the program improvement committee and learning communities had created additional levels to the existing hierarchy of the decision-making structures, viz, the principal and the administrative team, the departmental chairpersons' meeting, and the subject departments. Although the program improvement committee had not begun to function effectively, the learning communities were actively engaged in the decision-making process.

Some staff felt that the addition of the new structures did not facilitate decision making.

> Another level of bureaucracy has been introduced which has muddied things. It is now not a clean process. The policy of the administrators--by that word I mean the principal, his assistants and the department heads--is now crossed by the policy of the teachers and the learning community leaders. Now we have the principal, the departmental chairmen, the program improvement committee, and the learning communities engaged in a power struggle we do not need.

Other staff felt that the final decision-making authority remained with the principal and that the real value of the new structures was the contribution they made to the participation of staff in decision-making process.

Routinization of Decision Making in School A

Change in the characteristics of the decision-making process during the innovation stages at School A was primarily a function of the change of principals which had occurred two years previously.

The decision-making policy of the previous principal had been characterized by three features. First, it was dominated by his charismatic leadership which had inspired confidence in some staff to accept the innovations he proposed even though they did not fully understand or agree with them. As one teacher said, "I have actually had people tell me that the only reason we have agreed to this is because of our faith in the principal."

Second, it was characterized by the principal's innovative

thinking--"imaginative leaps" as one staff member described them--which created much vehement discussion among staff members.

Third, there was a clear statement by the principal of his intentions regarding the changes he wished to see in the instructional program.

> With that man you always knew where he was. He was at the helm. When a decision had to be made it was made by him. If he had time he would call the faculty together. If there wasn't time he made the decision and let us know.

The incoming principal had formalized the decision-making process through the establishment of the structures previously described and had compulsorily involved all the staff in the process. Some consequences arose from this action. First, those who had not previously involved themselves in buildingwide, student-centered, or cross-disciplinary decision making were now involved in such areas.

Second, all staff members were faced with the responsibility of being accountable for their decisions. As one said, "The 'silent majority,' and they form a large group, have been forced to take a stand."

Third, staff members who previously had been expected to fulfill one role teaching, were now expected to fulfill a second, student advising.

Fourth, subject department personnel who tradionally had made decisions in isolation, or in well established relationships with the administrators, now found themselves sharing some areas of decision making.

Fifth, the decision-making process was slowed considerably in some matters because several structures were required to deal with issues.

Satisfaction with Decision Making in School A

Different levels of satisfaction with the decision-making process existed among the staff at School A. Those who were satisfied expressed several reasons for their satisfaction. First, the concept of participative decision making had been recognized as an essential prerequisite for change and support of the instructional program. Second, the decision-making process was no longer so much dependent on the leadership of the principal but was carried out in structures which ensured that staff, students, and parents could be involved. Third, issues and matters other than subject development, such as the learning environment of the school, the full range of students' needs, etc. were considered important enough to merit discussion. Fourth, membership of the structures facilitated interdepartmental exchange of information and opinion. Fifth, participation in small group settings facilitated exchange of information and opinion in a manner which was impossible in large groups.

Some staff members expressed qualified satisfaction. They noted that the representative function of the program improvement committee was not yet working satisfactorily and the committee had not yet discussed policy issues of much significance to the school

operation; communication between learning communities and subject departments was negligible, so that there was little impact on the instructional program in the area of course development; and some teachers still remained opposed to the new decision-making policies and structures.

Those who were dissatisfied with the decision-making process expressed several reasons. First, they had been forced to become involved in the decision-making process, the implementation of which had been decided without their concurrence, and the operation of which they did not like. As one said, "You are practically forced to take part. I resent the impact which some [those influential as change agents] are having and I feel that to protect myself I must say my piece."

Second, they resented the intrusion of other decision-making bodies into their traditional domains of decision autonomy, and, in turn, were dissatisfied that they were expected to become involved in decision making in matters for which they had no expertise or in which they were not disposed to make decisions. They identified more strongly with their teaching role than they did with their buildingwide decision-making role.

> My identification is firstly with the senior high school, with the department, and as a teacher. I do not have a strong identification with my learning community and right now I do not think it crucial that I do.

Third, they were not willing to participate in decision making about procedural issues. They could not "be bothered" discussing procedures relating to smoking areas, school exit passes, and the like; they preferred to get on with their teaching.

Fourth, they resented the loss of teaching time and pointed to a consequence:

> When you are upset that you are losing teaching time, and you can see that there is not enough time to thrash a matter out fully, you tend to stay with the pedestrian way of doing things because you know that you can do that well.

Sixth, they were frustrated at the slowness of the process. They preferred directives rather than shared decision making. One staff member summed up this dilemma:

> There is not going to be change by some people--they are frustrated and unhappy and make others so. This in spite of much inservice--it makes no difference. Some people will "bitch" if they do not have input and some will "bitch" if their input is not heeded.

School B

Decision making at School B is described in terms of the change stage of the innovation, administrative structures and groups, the centralization of decision making, the routinization of decision making, and satisfaction with decision making.

Stage of Program Change in School B

School B was in its fifth year of operation at the time of the study. The innovative process had reached the routinization

stage and was characterized by ongoing activities which were fully integrated into the organization.

The school program incorporated a wide range of alternative educational environments, "schools-within-the-school," which provided students, teachers, and administrators with choices about learning style, environment, and orientation that best met their individual life styles and learning needs. One was primarily teacher directed--the traditional school; a second received direction from both teachers and students, but for the most part was teacher-directed--the flexible school; in a third, both students and teachers together planned the learning experiences--the contemporary school; a fourth centered around career orientation and preparation--a career school; a fifth provided a learning environment for special education students--the special school; and the sixth catered to dropout-prone students--the work-study school.

Sophomore students, and their parents, in the feeder schools selected an environment of their choice when students entered the eleventh grade at School B. Teachers could also elect to teach in an environment which was compatible with their educational philosophy.

The instructional program of each school was developed and taught independently of the other schools and each director assumed responsibilities equivalent to those of the principal of a small secondary school. They are, said one, "like 'itty-bitty' high schools operating inside the big one."

Some reevaluation had occurred since the initiation stage of the innovation program. A seventh school, which had provided the option of learning through the arts, had been closed and another was renamed because of community antagonism. Policies of the traditional, flexible and contemporary schools had begun to converge. The "flexday," a day in which students in the flexible school could schedule their own programs, had been abandoned. Increasingly, fewer program alternatives and less schedule flexibility were available to students. A buildingwide discipline policy had replaced the separate policies established by each school. Furthermore, there was a trend in some subjects to articulate course development among the schools. Reasons offered for this reevaluation were: (1) pressure from the community, through the district office that the school should "conform to traditional practice," and (2) a reassessment by the staff after a period of several years' experimentation.

The Administrative Structures and Groups in School B

The administrative structures and groups in School B included: the schools-within-the-school, the administrative cabinet, subject areas, students, teachers, and districtwide bodies.

Schools-Within-The-School

Each school was responsible for its own goals, course development, teaching mode, instructional environment, counseling, and

day-to-day operational arrangements. Schools were housed in self-contained sections of the building which, while it had not been designed specifically for such diversity, adequately accommodated the different educational philosophies and activities.

The number of students in each school was as follows: Special Education, 150; Career, 150; Work Study, 100; Traditional, 350; Flexible, 450; and Contemporary, 300. In addition, a counselor was appointed to service each school. Leadership of each school was the responsibility of the director. Although the final decision was made by the principal, the faculty of the unit was consulted before a director was appointed. Directors were paid responsibility allowances in addition to their regular teaching salaries and given released time. When the schools-within-the-school organization was created, the positions of subject department chairpersons were not retained. Reallocation of their allowances to the directors emphasized the importance of their roles in the functioning of the alternative schools.

Directors were responsible for the supervision of courses, the assignment and evaluation (but not hiring or firing) of teachers, and the scheduling of students within the schools. They could only advise on the transfer of students between schools. They had no control over their budgets; this was retained by the building principal. Such was not considered a serious impediment to the autonomy of the schools because so little additional money was available, and staff and directors alike had confidence in the principal to disburse

the limited funds fairly. Because no assistant principals had been appointed, the duties usually assigned to them, e.g., supervision of custodial staff, were allocated to the directors.

Generally, the principal had given as much latitude to the directors to develop their schools as they felt they needed. One said,

> He was not always comfortable, but the school philosophy which emphasized education by choice meant that he was committed to give them freedom. He gave them the power of attorney as it were.

Regarding course development and learning mode, each school was autonomous. Directors had responsibility for approval of proposals put to them by a teacher or groups of teachers in their schools. Rarely were their decisions overturned by the principal, except for economic constraints, or by the administrative cabinet where their decisions were also discussed.

Cooperation among schools occurred in several ways. Teachers conducted courses in other schools when necessary but remained aligned with their own school; students took courses in other schools if they were not available in their own; and sometimes a school with sufficient resources would conduct a course which was needed by other schools.

Counseling and guidance of students was focused through the counselor assigned to and located in each school. In conjunction with parents they advised students on their school choice and, once they were enrolled, assisted with transfers, scheduling, personal

problems, part-time jobs, etc. Because they were in close proximity to students, teachers, and the director, counselors were able to make decisions quickly with a maximum of information and understanding of the individual. One counselor explained the advantages of the situation thus:

> The decision making is immediate, informed and frequent. Before [the innovation occurred] it was difficult for one man to deal with a heterogeneous group of students. Now with the homogeneous grouping, there is more consistency of treatment. When a student is skipping, I work with people who have already dealt with similar students in similar situations.

Proposals that each teacher should accept responsibility for counseling of 20-25 students were discounted by most staff members. They felt that their close association with students in the school ensured that they were adequately informed about their needs, and that they were in a position to meet them. Some felt also that they "could not do a counselor's work."

Counselors had large student enrollments to serve. Some staff members felt that while the present organization afforded the opportunity for a better service than did the organization of traditional schools, they were still unable to meet all students' needs adequately.

Regarding day-to-day operational decisions within the units, decisions such as rescheduling classes and credit variation were made by the directors in consultation with their faculty. Formal meetings were few and were held less frequently than they had been in the past.

> We used to meet weekly. Now people just get together. It is easy for it to happen because we have the freedom to do that and because we are scheduled together in the school.

Only on major issues, e.g., new courses, did the director or individual staff members take their concerns to the principal. Most matters were decided immediately within each school and without reference to him.

Some directors had accepted the authority delegated to them more than had other directors. Respondents who placed high value on the philosophy which had created diversity among the schools regretted that generally they had "not used their initiative and drive more to make their schools unique."

An essential philosophical component on which the instructional program was based at School B, was that conflict about educational values was to be minimized through the creation of several schools each with a different philosophy. One of the architects of the program said,

> The American high school represents a compromise. On the one hand, a group of people is highly traditional; on the other, they are highly liberal. And people are spread out along the continuum. The result is a compromise. It has to be if we are all going to live in a single system. The compromise has to be agreed to or imposed. Some principals impose--but they will not go to one extreme--even if they say, "This is how it will be." Some attempt to reach consensus. It is still a compromise. We have accepted the differences and have put teachers of different philosophies into different schools. We have reduced conflict and allowed each to contribute in the ways he or she feels he can do best.

Conflict was further reduced by colocating students of like orientations with teachers of the same philosophy. One teacher reported,

> Normal high schools are not cohesive because the philosophies of the teachers differ. Here we work with people who think like we do. Teachers and students feel more comfortable in the different learning environments.

Conflict over teaching modes had not surfaced at School B. Although there had been some conflict over a schoolwide discipline policy, little conflict had to be resolved in day-to-day matters because the different groups had been separated.

Teachers did not always agree with the practice in some of the other schools but they recognized that they had made a commitment to accept difference, and support it, when they chose to join a school. This had not been so when, in earlier years, only one "different" school was appended as an alternative to the entire school program. Then, hostility to the program and the teachers had arisen:

> But now, when there are a number of alternatives, no one is different because everyone is different. You don't stand out like a sore thumb if everyone is a sore thumb.

The Administrative Cabinet

The administrative cabinet consisted of the principal, the directors of the six schools, the director of counseling, an assistant to the principal, and the coordinator of the federally funded program intended to disseminate information about School B's innovative program.

The cabinet was concerned with schoolwide policy and management. Issues such as the provision of a smoking area, racial

conflicts, and articulation between the senior high school and other schools were raised by the principal, directors, or teachers who were free to place items on the meeting agenda.

The meeting also functioned as a two-way communication link. Information and directives, whether from the district office, the principal or from the cabinet meeting itself were disseminated to the faculty through the directors. They in turn communicated faculty concerns to each other and to the principal. This was an important function because full faculty meetings were held only occasionally and irregularly.

Meetings of the administrative cabinet were generally characterized by a very high level of participation by members. There was no constraint on the issues raised by members and no hesitancy was felt in offering alternative solutions to problems. Furthermore, the directors' contributions were highly valued. Their different values and perspectives were appreciated and they were accepting of each others' different philosophies. The fact that they were teaching and were "out in the schools" and not confined to an office for most of the time gave the directors high credibility.

> Being a grassroots director gives a perception that needs to be listened to. A director is involved with 10 to 12 teachers and 100 to 200 kids, on site. No assistant principal ever got to know kids as I can here.

Subject Areas

There were no subject departments and no department chairpersons at School B. Curricular articulation between the schools was

negligible. Decisions regarding courses to be taught, materials, teaching methods, grading practices, etc., were left to the initiative of individual teachers within the schools. Proposals were approved by directors in accordance with the educational philosophy of the school, and the availability of teaching time, space, etc. With the exception of some subjects requiring specialized equipment, e.g., graphic communication or science, each school taught a full range of subjects considered appropriate for the students.

Three reasons were offered for these arrangements. First, subject departments in traditional high schools had inhibited communication of ideas, and department members had developed a "ghetto mentality."

Second, differences in educational philosophy, teaching style, attitudes regarding discipline, etc., led to arguments about subject content and about methodology. As one said, "It was not unusual to find in one department six flaming liberals and a rigid head."

Grouping of teachers with similar educational philosophies abolished the factionalized departments in School B, with advantageous consequences for the students.

> When there were different teachers in one department, the students sensed the hostility. Here, both students and teachers are more relaxed; teachers are supportive of each other's style; and students can relate the different subjects of their schedule more easily. They don't need to make the mental leaps from one classroom to another as they do in a traditional high school. The atmosphere is continuous--frequent adjustment is not required because the expectation is the same.

The schools in School B could be organized around the students' needs, not those of subjects because, "How you teach and how you relate to kids is more important than the subject you teach."

Third, subject department chairpersons in traditional schools had limited authority to make decisions. Proposals which teachers wished to implement had to be channeled up through a hierarchy of decision makers. The process took too long. In School B the directors were able to make most decisions immediately; they had intimate knowledge of their students' needs; and they had educational philosophies similar to their teachers.

Exchanges of information and ideas occurred informally and through occasional meetings called to discuss such logistical matters as textbook selection or to gather information, such as inventories of equipment. One teacher, called the "subject coordinator," volunteered for the duty of communicating with subject teachers across the schools and acting as a communication link with the principal. Such teachers did not have the status or responsibilities of a departmental chairperson.

Opinion regarding the loose departmental organization varied. One teacher said, "I think if subject departments were reinstated, the programs now organized around kids would fall apart."

Some were pleased that the school had avoided institutionalization of subject departments on the grounds described above and that the administrative organization of School B was less complex and less conducive to discord without them.

> If you have many groups it leads to power problems. Had we set up departments as well, we would have had a power struggle. Questions such as who reports to who, when and if--the principal, the director, or the departmental chairperson? Now the director is all things to all people.

Other teachers did not see any problems; they were able to teach as they wished, obtained support as they needed it, and enjoyed the harmonious relationships among the faculty of their school. Others were less than satisfied. They preferred a "more structured, authoritarian curriculum framework" which they felt served students needs better than did the present courses which lacked "strength and rigor." They sought the "leadership" of a department head rather than the "laissez-faire" approach which they felt characterized curriculum development in School B. They rejected the view that a director could make decisions about courses as well as a "discipline oriented" subject departmental chairperson could.

Most respondents were concerned about the absence of subject articulation among the schools and among the other secondary and elementary schools in the district. The concern was less on "how" a subject was taught than on "what" was taught. In School B the problem was particularly acute for those students who transferred from one school to another. To solve this problem subject teachers were beginning to come together both within the school and without to decide course content, objectives and expectations. Some English teachers in the school were actively supporting a districtwide movement to establish a K-12 program for all students.

Students

Students did not participate formally in the decision-making process because no student council existed. Their nonparticipation was an issue in the school at the time of the study, however. The principal had proposed a form of student government which would have functioned as a "think tank," a means of providing student input into the decision process. The proposal was generally discounted by most staff who felt there was no need because they were already in close touch with student opinion in their schools. A director said, "In small units we get to know the students' feelings better. My office is in the middle of this complex. Kids can pop in here anytime and sound off. They do." Another reported, "Students feel free to talk. We have a society here where any member can talk to each other. We are like a family. Kids know each other and their teachers."

Student interest in the proposal was negligible. Those respondents who regretted this were uncertain whether it was due to the success of the informal way in which the pulse of the students was taken or whether it was due to student apathy toward issues.

Teachers

Very few full faculty meetings occurred in School B. However, teachers did participate in the decision-making process. First, individual teachers decided most of the course development and instructional matters.

Second, the school-within-the-school organization facilitated access to the director and a cooperative involvement in problem solving by all members of the team.

Third, their views were adequately represented by their directors at the administrative cabinet.

Fourth, many teachers had participated in the summer workshops for which they had been paid to participate in the planning of programs. They regretted that these had diminished as funds became depleted.

School Board and District Office

The school board and district office had an impact on the decision-making process of the school which was increasing for two reasons. First, the shortage of money in the district inhibited expansion and innovation and required that schools cut back.

Second, adverse community reaction to nontraditional education in general, and to School B's program in particular, had caused the school board and district office to retract from its traditional policy of encouraging local school diversity and autonomy. Letters, editorials, and word-of-mouth, had put pressure on the district office to issue directives--or had caused the principal to anticipate such directives--which impinged on the autonomy of the school and which were often antithetical to it. For example, staff were prohibited from conducting planning workshops in an off-campus retreat house because of community disapproval and a consequent

district office directive, even though such sessions had been regarded by all as very productive. The open-campus lunch period--a component of the school's program to develop student ability to make decisions--was stopped by the principal because he was concerned about the school's "image" in the community. The requirement that the principal explain the need for each money request resulted in the board becoming involved in curricular matters, for example, questioning the appropriateness of course titles and content.

Opinion among the staff of School B regarding district office involvement in the decision-making process of the school varied. Some approved. They were uncomfortable with the approach to curriculum development and wished for a return to a structured situation through a hierarchical decision-making organization. They reflected conservative values which predominated in the community.

> For some it might have been exhilarating confusion. But we are a small community, blue collar, self-contained. The profusion of choice has been unnatural. School is viewed as an authoritarian institution. There has been too much permissiveness and options which the community generally does not support.

The image of the school in some sections of the community was such that the school continued to receive blame even though earlier problems had been corrected.

> We could run a traditional program here and the image would not change. But the philosophy gets the blame for things which it is not responsible for. In fact we have tightened up. Five of the six schools still take daily attendance and this school has more contact with parents than any other school I know. Parents

> think that because things didn't happen to them it shouldn't happen to their kids.

Some respondents felt that the principal need not have responded so obediently as they thought he had in some cases. They felt that the district office should be "stood up to." Most respondents, however, perceived that the influence of the school board and district office was one which neither the principal nor the staff could ignore. As one said, "A public school can't be much different than what the community wants it to be. Something must happen in order for us to survive."

Centralization of Decision Making in School B

The principal retained the ultimate authority to approve or reject decisions made within the schools as well as those made by the cabinet for the entire school. His stated policy, however, was to delegate responsibility for school decisions to the directors and their staffs and to place high trust in the views of his directors when schoolwide issues were considered.

> I put great merit in the directors. The process would be empty without those people. I trust their judgment about matters within their schools because they are nearest to the students and teachers and understand the philosophy of their school best. Because they are at the grassroots, I value their input into buildingwide decisions.

Regarding decisions made within the schools, some directors felt that they did not, in fact, have full autonomy to make decisions. They regretted that their "clout" was limited. Sometimes the

principal "heeded other faculty members, influentials," who could, and did, bypass the directors who were not perceived to be their immediate superiors. One said, "He says, 'These are the things directors will do--they are responsible for dealing with them.' But internally he looks at the whole flock of teachers as his."

Some observers, however, thought that directors did not always delegate decision-making authority to staff as had been intended. One reported,

> Generally, decisions affecting a school are not made by that faculty as they should be. It is not made by the group of people but, by and large, by the director. Sometimes there is input, sometimes not. There is a lot in only one school. The ultimate decision for solving a problem is not arrived at collectively so much as it is handed down from above. What has happened is that the principal has given it to others. Some of our directors guard their power jealously.

Respondents within the schools did not express this view. They spoke of "discussing" problems with each other and with the director, of "working things out together," of "being just like a family." One said, "It is very open. People just get together and make a decision. I am often asked for my opinion."

Regarding buildingwide decision making most respondents felt that the "main" decisions were now made at the central office; the locus of authority had shifted away from the school. The principal was not perceived to be authoritarian, "But he does urge more support for things that have high priority in the district office."

Decisions were not always conveyed down through the hierarchy directly. The superintendent never addressed staff directly, the principal did only occasionally. But there was sometimes a "feeling" about a matter, an expectation that the district office would want the matter attended to.

> My courses are more traditonal now than they were. I have tightened up. I don't know if it is just happening or if someone has said that this has to be. I can't recall my director saying so. Its just something that takes place.

The principal conceded that while he still had a "lot of autonomy," he was not more likely to "check with downtown"; that it was now more important to inform the superintendent before the programmatic change was made.

Within the school, a flat rather than hierarchical decision-making model existed. Staff were able to reach decision makers without going through several successive channels to obtain a decision. As one said, "We don't have to go through a long chain of command. There is no status in the way." Much satisfaction was expressed that this element of the original plan was still in place.

Routinization of Decision Making in School B

Staff members of several years' tenure reported that the decision-making process had changed. There was less heuristic decision making at the time of the study than during the initiation and implementation stages of the innovation processes. Less decision making was actually occurring and meetings were fewer and less formal. There was less participation by the staff and the process

had become more authoritarian in character. They cited several items of evidence. First, the summer workshops which had involved staff members in creating, planning, and developing the innovative program had been discontinued for lack of money. Directors' "retreats" during the school year had been discontinued for this reason, and because of school board disapproval. Staff regretted their discontinuance.

> We became closer knit groups. We used to argue and fight. We would be at it for 10 to 12 hours a day. Great. There was continual acceptance of each other, a working with each other. Confidence grew. We built this school. But now individuals or the principals and the director make the decisions.

Second, staff members did not appear as committed to the innovation as they once were, nor as willing to seek change. One said,

> There are too many faculty members now who might not care if we just opened our door and just had one big school. The one thing we have to fight is the tendency for the schools to become alike.

Two explanations were offered. One was:

> In the beginning we felt like pioneers. Then, there were changes in the staff. The process of communication and hence of understanding, had to be developed with them. Commitment had to develop. But this was difficult, because they had to be told, "This is what we have done before." There was less room for the new teachers to be involved in the determination of what the group did.

The other reason was that staff members had become less creative as the program and structure was built.

> In the first year we grew--there was a constant day-to-day growing with each other and around each other. Now I sense a decline. It would have occurred had the same people remained.

Third, given staff satisfaction with the program, and the fact that most of the policy setting decisions had been made during the initiation stage, there were few decisions left to be made other than routine ones.

> People do not feel that they need to be creative. When we were building the program there were almost no parameters. We felt we could do almost anything. Now we have established our parameters and so our decisions are becoming more routine. Now we are down to the nitty gritty of making the classes work.

Fourth, district office directives were increasing in frequency and significance.

Satisfaction with Decision Making in School B

Some aspects of the decision-making process were highly satisfactory to all teachers. They valued highly the ease with which they could approach the principal, his willingness to listen to their concerns, and his insistence that they be involved in the process. They also valued highly the decision-making process within the schools because they had ready access to the director and their colleagues. They valued the small group setting which resulted in decisions being made quickly and without reference to decision makers higher in the structure, thus delaying decisions. They were highly satisfied that most decisions were made at the "grassroots" where the decision makers had an intimate knowledge of the situation and people involved.

Most were highly satisfied that decisions regarding courses and instruction were made by individual teachers although some regretted that subject articulation among the schools was lacking and that subject departments did not exist to ensure that the rigor of the disciplines was maintained.

Those who were less than satisfied preferred hierarchical decision-making arrangements in schools.

> Diffusion of authority adds to confusion. It is a false premise that the direction of an institution like this can proceed through the deliberation of committees.

Others, while they remained convinced of the success of the process were frustrated by its slowness. One teacher said,

> Parkinson's law applies! It takes too long to reach closure. The principal's view is that if one requires people to do the work there should be enough time for them to reach the decision. I think he ought to be a little more dictatorial at times.

Two consequences emerged from the option which teachers had exercised to teach in a school of their own choosing. One was high morale and a low sense of frustration. Teachers were gratified that they had been given the opportunity to choose an environment which was congenial to them and they were highly satisfied with the working relationships which developed in each of the schools. A second was that teachers in School B complained less to administrators about relationships with colleagues; they were less frustrated about working conditions than teachers in the other district high schools, and, as a consequence, were perhaps less militant in opposition to the school board and district office.

Some respondents, however, felt that the high morale and absence of conflict, which had been hoped for when the structures were established, had resulted in complacency among many teachers. They regretted that the creativeness which had been a feature of the decision-making process during the initiation and implementation stages of the innovation had disappeared.

> The decision-making process is not going anywhere now. That means it has regressed. The staff do not get excited about any "big" issues anymore. Heaven knows there are some big issues to get excited about. We need to take another long hard look at ourselves. Our decisions have become routine.

School C

Decision making at School C is described in terms of the change stage of the innovation, administrative structures, and groups, the centralization of decision making, the routinization of decision making, and satisfaction with decision making.

Stage of Program Change in School C

School C was in its ninth year of operation. The innovative process had reached the routinization stage and was characterized by ongoing activities which were fully integrated into the organization. As well, personnel within and outside the school had for some time engaged in a reevaluation of the innovation and were assessing where the school was not accomplishing its goals as effectively as they thought it should and how the school goals and procedures might be changed.

Regarding the routinization stage, there existed sustained implementation of the goals and enabling procedures which had been developed during the previous stages of the innovative process. The concepts of individual student learning rate and continuous progress were firmly established in the course structure; mechanisms existed for clustering subjects so that students could select appropriately for their career choices; a teacher-advisor program afforded each student the opportunity to establish a close relationship with one adult in the school; and administrative structures were in place to support them.

Regarding the reevaluation stage, performance gaps were perceived and staff were attempting to redress these. The school had not fully implemented the policy of indiviualization of instruction; students were not participating effectively in the decision-making process; the heavy work load--daily notification of grades, course openings, and student scheduling--was dysfunctional (although the school had recently installed a computer to minimize this, it had had little effect up to the time of the study); some staff remained concerned that the expertise of subject teachers was not yet fully utilized to assist in student scheduling; the resource center was not operating to the satisfaction of most (a full faculty meeting was held during the time of the study to consider what might be done).

Persons outside the school were also evaluating its goals and methods used to achieve them. Parents and citizens generally

were concerned that they should approximate more closely the goals and procedures of a traditional high school, viz, attention to the basic skills and attention to more rigorous student control and discipline. Prior to the study the community had engaged in a survey of opinion toward the school. This had resulted in some changes, such as structured scheduling of sophomores for one semester, and a public education campaign intended to inform the community of the school's goals and practices.

The Administrative Structures and Groups in School C

Administrative structures and groups at School C included: administrative staff, the administrative cabinet, coordinators' meetings, faculty meetings, the curriculum review committee, subject areas, guide groups, and districtwide bodies.

Administrative Staff

The administrative team consisted of the principal and two associate principals. Each of their job performance profiles was specified in the Operational Plan--a handbook for personnel.

The principal was the final authority in all matters. He specified job performances, assigned and evaluated teachers, and was responsible for their professional development; he was the main liaison and communication agent for the school; he acted as the final authority on all management questions; and was responsible for appraising learning units, a duty he shared with his fellow administrators.

The associate principal for operations was responsible for the supervision of the grounds, facilities, and classified staff and for student scheduling, registration and attendance, and for discipline. He shared with the other members of the administrative team the responsibility for evaluating staff and approving learning units in specified subject fields.

The associate principal for student services was responsible for all extracurricular and extracampus learning activities, student activities, campus supervision, student destination, surveys and college articulation programs. He shared with other administrators responsibility for evaluation of staff and approval of learning units in specified subject fields.

Within this group, the principal advocated a "team management" approach to decision making. He said, "I retain the final decision-making authority, but day-to-day operational decisions have been shared by all three of us." His belief was, "You have to give people autonomy if you are going to delegate responsibility."

All confirmed the principal's view. Their attitude toward it was generally positive. The only negative response was that the division of responsibility for approval of learning units led to inconsistency as to what was required. Several informants said that it would be better if one member of the administrative team were to have this responsibility--as had occurred previously in the school. The principal's opinion about this proposition was that since there

was "less need for curriculum oversight (now), we felt that if each had a piece of the problem it would lead to better decision making."

The Administrative Cabinet

The administrative cabinet consisted of the three members of the administrative team, six area coordinators, and six team leaders. The cabinet generally met monthly after school and was chaired by the principal. The functions of the cabinet were to discuss and make recommendations on any matter which affected the school, e.g., maintenance of the schedule or district mandates. Agenda items frequently related to matters which the principal wished to have discussed. Recommendations might be passed to the principal or issues might become the topic of discussion at a full faculty meeting.

Sometimes, the cabinet would establish a task force to gather information on an issue, to consider alternative recommendations and to present a final recommendation to the cabinet or to the faculty. At the end of the school year the cabinet met to list problems which had arisen during the previous twelve months. Members divided into groups to discuss each problem and to propose solutions. Recurring problems were those relating to student attendance and discipline, use of the resource center, and procedures for students who wished to discontinue classes.

The principals' view was that the cabinet was the "major" decision-making body in the school. "No major policy decisions

are made without staff participation through the leadership group called the cabinet."

Staff perceived the cabinet to be an arena for discussion of issues raised by any personnel in the school. The principal's claim that all were free to place items on the agenda was supported by staff who also perceived the cabinet to be a major decision-making body. Subject teachers felt that matters of concern to them could be raised by their area coordinators and team leaders and aired at the building level. For this reason, some regretted that cabinet meetings were not held as frequently as in the past.

Coordinators' Meeting

The coordinators' meeting consisted of the three members of the administrative team, the six area coordinators, and the librarian. Team leaders were omitted from this committee because they could not be released from their teaching duties to attend. Furthermore, it was the opinion of the principal that the smaller group facilitated the decision-making process. The coordinators' meeting occurred weekly during the school day and was chaired by the principal. Day-to-day operational decisions, such as the calendar, budgeting items, but not curriculum decisions, were made by the group. It was regarded by the principal as the executive arm of the cabinet.

Faculty Meetings

The full faculty met weekly in the morning before school began. The principal offered two reasons for this: the meeting could

be attended by all faculty--other activities had drawn some staff away when meetings had been held after school--and their length was predetermined by the school schedule. At the time of the study the functions of the faculty meeting were, generally, not to make decisions on issues, although occasionally a major issue, such as use of the resource center, would be discussed. More often they were used for staff development programs relating to the curriculum or guide groups so that faculty would be better informed for making day-to-day decisions in their classrooms or guide groups.

Nevertheless, teacher participation in the decision-making process occurred formally through the structures (they were free to contribute agenda items and did so), and informally through the "open door" policy of the administrators. One administrator said, "The staff is not reticent about what we administrators do. Every time they feel they have a problem they come to us or get the matter raised by the area coordinator." Teachers confirmed that perception.

> The administrators are not directly dictatorial. I can go to any of the principals. I know that something will be done. I feel an important part of the system--it's positive. I'm not just a person who is told what to do.
>
> I like the way decisions are made here. Though the principal still makes them, the coordinators and teachers are very much involved.

Others were not willing to become involved in the building-wide decision making. Some, who were new to teaching, or to the school, gave first priority to establishing their teaching skills

or to establishing their subject in the instructional offerings of the school. Others were not interested in what they perceived to be the politicking which went with the involvement in buildingwide decision making. As one teacher said, "I'm not interested in administration, just my own little corner, just the decisions in my subjects. I'm not interested in politics."

The Curriculum Review Committee

This committee consisted of seven members who were representative of the several subject fields in the school including counselors. Members were elected on a rotating basis. They were not necessarily area coordinators or team leaders.

Meetings, chaired by the principal, were held infrequently at the time of the study--about every three months. During the initiation and implementation stages of the school's individualized program, however, meetings had been held weekly.

The function of the committee was to review all proposals for new courses or all proposals for changes in courses. Nearly always, input to the committee came from the subject areas and the associate principals. Only rarely did members initiate proposals. Sometimes the staff attended meetings to explain their proposals.

The review function was designed to ensure that the school's curriculum philosophy was actually implemented. Hence, it examined such issues as the following: a review of course proposals to ensure that the cluster and graduation requirements were met, whether

specific courses were appropriate for college-entry students; whether unnecessary overlap occurred in existing course structures; whether a student transferring to a new cluster could be granted equivalency for courses taken in another cluster; and what amount of credit would be granted for each course. Members did not discuss how courses should be taught.

Opinion as to importance of the committee was, almost always, very positive. It was thought necessary by some informants as a curb on the excesses of some teachers and subject departments who in their zeal to advance their own disciplines had lost sight of the school's curriculum philosophy and the needs of the students. One teacher said,

> I think it is pretty important. It prevents a department from putting unnecessary requirements on a student. It is a must in this kind of a school. It doesn't bother me too much as an individual because the committee also has a braking effect on other subject teachers.

> Teachers will agree to a school curriculum philosophy in writing, but they do whatever they want to when they go into their classrooms--the speciality of the subject fields practically guarantees it. So we instituted [this committee] to prevent as much of that happening as we could.

There was also positive support for the effect which the committee had on the curriculum of the school, as evidenced by the following comments:

> The committee causes teachers to tighten up. It has also caused the principals in charge of approving learning units to uphold our standards too. I value that.

> The important thing about it is that everyone knows what is happening. Before, it was done by one or two people. Now it is done by several people out in the open so that everyone can participate.

Several persons looked back with nostalgia when they considered the impact the committee had made in previous years.

> That's where it really happened. Our philosophy was made a reality there. It had real authority over the curriculum. One of its characteristics was that members had a sense of purpose which was related to their delegated authority. There was cross fertilization and compromise among the subject departments.

At the time of this study the influence of the committee was waning. The principal had taken over the chairmanship because he thought the committee "needed more clout." Another teacher reported, "It has declined in power because the need has declined. Now it is engaged in refinement changes."

Subject Areas

Certified staff were grouped into six areas: humanities, industrial education, mathematics and science, physical education, and counseling. Each area consisted of teachers of allied subjects; for example, the humanities area consisted of language arts, social science, speech, drama, music, foreign language, and art. Area functions were to propose new courses or improvements in existing ones; to develop these in terms of objectives, learning strategies, learning materials; to sequence courses; to teach the courses; and to manage the day-to-day operations of the area.

Two reasons were offered for the amalgamation of subject

teachers into areas rather than subject departments. First, the faculty was not very large. Establishment of a separate department for each subject would have created a system which provided little support for each teacher, and an unnecessarily large number of communication networks in such a small school. The second reason related to the contribution which subject departments were perceived to make to the decision-making process in a traditional school.

> The old subject departments, each within the subject areas and each with a departmental head, were barriers to change. We tried to amalgamate them and pull them together, so we set up the areas as a means of breaking down the decision-making power of the old subject departments. We established the position of coordinator with a broad subject responsibility, rather than a narrow single subject responsibility.
>
> What we wanted to do was to handle whole problems of the entire school by interaction. This didn't happen in the old subject departments. The structure prevented it.

One teacher was appointed as the area coordinator. If there were four or more teachers in a particular subject field a team was also appointed. A coordinator, or within a subject field, a team leader, performed a number of functions. They taught classes, helped assign teachers, set class loads, and requisitioned materials. They also advised on course proposals within their areas or fields. Coordinators were not perceived to have the same status as that of departmental chairpersons in traditonal schools. One coordinator said, "It is not a power or status position. More of a servant. We are primarily teachers, and don't want to hang on to power. The position has rotated among our area teachers."

The dual teacher-coordinator role was felt to be an exhausting one and had caused a rotation of staff in the position.

> In other areas it is due to attrition. Some coordinators "burn out." There is a conflict of time. Coordinators were meant to be communicators among teachers but they have developed functions which are primarily administrative.

Decisions regarding courses were the responsibility of several groups within the school. Teachers were primarily, but not solely, responsible for generating courses and deciding how they should be taught. Sometimes, the principal, the associate principals, and coordinators proposed courses if they felt a need existed. Proposals were first put to the coordinators, or team leaders, for "advice or recommendation." They did not have authority to prescribe, but they advised on the appropriateness of courses in relation to the school's philosophy, subject matter, course options already available, logistical problems, and the like. Similar factors were considered by the administrators to whom the proposal was put next. Then the proposal was considered by the curriculum committee for approval regarding its appropriateness for the vocational clusters. The principal summed up the reason for the process as follows:

> We think the teacher is professionally trained and an expert in his subject. We think the teacher should write courses. Then the courses should be subject to outside scrutiny of interested people. If it can stand the test it should be taught.

The learning units which translated the course proposal into classroom activities were developed by teachers, submitted to the

team leader or coordinator, and finally passed to the administrator responsible for the particular area. One administrator summed up his responsibility this way:

> We insist on individualization of instruction. We mean students learning at different rates with continuous progress. Teachers must teach within the school philosophy; we don't have them if they won't. They have latitude to teach as they think within that--not all teachers teach the same--that is not desirable. We insist that a variety of materials and media be used. We encourage them to seek other techniques. It is rare to find class sets of texts or class lectures in this school. We wouldn't like a teacher to teach in the lock step way very often.

Teachers generally accepted the need for this monitoring. However, teachers of some subjects, reported that they had considerably more freedom to develop their own courses and teach as they wished because as one said, "No one else in the school is an expert in my subject and besides, the pressure is on the basics.

Teachers were afforded a considerable degree of participation in the decision-making process within their subject fields.

> A lot of the decisions are made by teachers. It is so different from a traditional school where the subject department decides what is to be taught and teachers do as they are told. Here, the materials we work on are our own concern. I am satisfied.

Opinions regarding the involvement of the several groups in the curriculum decision-making process were both positive and negative. Most valued it highly.

> The requirement that units be written before they are taught and the requirement that they be approved in advance means that no teacher dreams up lessons or

> teachers by the seat of his pants. He knows, and the kids know, what the objectives are and what the line of continuous progress is.
>
> Some teachers believe that what they do in their classroom is their own business. But in this school what we do in our classroom has to be everyone's business. It is important that everyone knows what is being taught in class. I think it is good that things can't be changed on a whim.
>
> I can't develop my curriculum entirely as I want or teach entirely as I want because it affects the school as a whole. I accept that.

Teachers in some subject fields also gave qualified support for the system. When they felt that a buildingwide policy was not conducive to students' interests in the subject field they insisted that their view be upheld. For example, sequencing of units, originally rejected as antithetical to the schools' curriculum policy, was introduced by several subject departments "after a long fight." Another example related to the guides scheduling of students in courses without being adequately informed as to the level of difficulties or appropriateness of the course for the student. Several teachers contended that the departments ought to have more involvement in such decisions.

Guide Groups

Guide groups were not linked in any formal relationship to the decision-making structures either through representative membership or through formal communication channels. Nevertheless, they played a significant role in the decision-making process. This came

about through regular and frequent interaction of all staff--including the administrators--in their capacity as guides or teacher advisors. Each guide was required to assist the student to plan his or her courses, to monitor--on a daily basis--the student's progress, and to assist with daily scheduling. As well, the guide was an advisor on personal problems, although serious problems were referred to the counselors.

The interchange of information which occurred when guides sought solutions to their student's problems from other teachers ensured that there was a broad and deep understanding by all staff of policies and practices in each department of the school. Furthermore, the face-to-face contact ensured that people came to know each other.

> At the least we know who is who. At the best we know what they do, what they think, what their problems are. When we meet at the faculty meeting we are meeting with individual people not just "other teachers from some other department."

This interaction facilitated the decision-making process. As one teacher said, "When someone raises an issue most of us already are aware that it is a problem and have had some contact with it. We don't come to issues cold."

School Board and District Office

The school board and district office personnel had an impact on the decision-making process within the school. Opinions as to the nature and degree of the impact varied. Some believed that the

board confined itself to policy making and did not make decisions as to how the policy should be implemented. Others felt that the school board and the district office personnel did affect decisions regarding procedures within the school building, such as preventing establishment of a new course for budgetary reasons. There was sympathy for the principal who was perceived to have his decisional autonomy restricted, if not directly then indirectly, by the necessity to compromise in order to retain community support for the tax levies.

Teachers' professional behavior in the classroom was not directly decided by the school board and district office. Others expressed the opinion that while the school board supported the concept of individualized instruction, it was not aware of the implications for school administration or organization. The board's decision not to provide additional resources was thought to be tantamount to rejecting the concept.

> I have never felt that the board and the district office have ever understood what we were trying to do here. Or if they did, what it meant in terms of the operational day-to-day requirements--money, personnel. They agree with individualizing instruction, but as to what it means in terms of sequence, learning, movement of students, how much time is required, has not got across to the system.

Regarding the willingness of the district office staff to be involved in decision making within the building, the staff expressed a variety of opinions.

> The downtown administration is distinguished by their absence. They don't spend time here. They don't want to get involved. They are not part of creating a curriculum except when there is a problem. So the board only hears things from the back door.

Others, however, thought that the board and district office were becoming more involved in the decision-making process and so constraining the decisional autonomy of the building personnel. The trend was gaining momentum. As examples, they pointed to a district initiative which had resulted in the school creating a structured program and schedule for sophomores although the concept was perceived to be contrary to the school's curriculum philosophy; to the requirement that curricular activities proposed by staff be carefully budgeted and then approved by the district office before such proposals could be implemented; to increasing demands for test scores, lists of students with excellent records, and the like, which the staff perceived to be part of a district office thrust that they be accountable.

Much of the increasing involvement was due to growing community interest in, and reaction to, the school's program of individualized instruction. The school board and district office personnel were seen to make decisions, or to pressure the building personnel to make decisions, in response to specific complaints, such as use of a particular textbook; and in response to interpretation by the district personnel of prevailing community attitudes and pressures, e.g., apparent distaste for the degree of freedom allowed students. A variety of opinions existed regarding this involvement.

Some recognized that the school board and the district office had a wider perspective which ought to be heeded by the building personnel because it provided valuable input into decision making. Others thought it an unwarranted intrusion into their professional autonomy. One said, "Our rights as individual teachers are being taken over. We feel that we are being threatened. That is hurting." Even when a decision had been imposed which some teachers felt they could support, there was resentment among them that the decision had been imposed from "the outside." One said,

> When you have been involved in decision making for eight years, as we have here, the reaction against decisions imposed from outside is very intense--more than in other schools where staff are less involved.

Some said they understood that financial and resource allocations had to be restrained. However,

> We have had a fairly long tradition of doing what we have wanted to do. Now we have to make decisions under the restraint that have always existed in a traditional school and we resent that.

There was also resentment toward increasing community involvement because staff felt either the community did not understand what was being done for their children or were uninformed as to what was happening in the school.

> They [the parents and citizens] don't know. I resent the community ignorance and their apathy, and refusal to come to meetings. A recent survey showed that they didn't understand our system of individualizing instruction.

> There is a lapse of time between the instructional process and the effects. The lapse of time you have to weather.

> There is a lag between what they know--and what they think. I mean their opinions about the school now are based on what they knew--or have just discovered--about the schools' operation several years ago.

Centralization of Decision Making in School C

Ultimate authority for all building decisions resided with the principal. All informants agreed that this was, and should be, so. However, the principal seldom appeared to exercise his veto power. Most frequently he involved staff members in decision making. The principal's rationale for this policy was:

> We began with an assessment of the decision-making process in traditional schools and felt that it was wrong. We felt that teachers were not able to use the skills which they had effectively. We felt that they did not have the power to be as flexible as they knew they could be. We had institutionalized everyone. So we gave teachers, from the bottom up, a chance to break out of the authoritarian mode and replace it with guiding up and down the line. You don't find that in a traditional school.

The decision-making process was usually characterized by an attempt to reach consensus about solutions to problems.

> We always try to live by the rule of consensus. If there is a 50-50 split we try to rework [the search for a solution]. We don't always get it. There are always things that come from above--we have no choice. But it is important that a sincere attempt is being made to get it.

While some teachers felt that the search for consensus was not pursued as diligently as much as it had been in previous years, or as much as they personally would like, a degree of flexibility existed in the process which allowed for a decision, once made, to be reviewed by any of the decision-making bodies should there be a

persistent opposition or should the decision prove unworkable. The principal said:

> There is always an understanding here that decisions once made can be reconsidered. I can take opposition and criticism. I should be able to withstand that.

Another respondent confirmed this:

> Coordinators are approached if a decision is opposed. Clarification is sought in the coordinator's meeting and staff are informed. If there is still dissension teachers ask for, and get, a face-to-face discussion with those who made the decision. Then the matter is discussed again and a final decision is made. I think it a fine process.

Some teachers felt that the principal exercised his authority indirectly.

> There are certain decisions which our administration know what they want. They know what they want done but they like to involve staff, rather than selling, or imposing the idea. So they involve people in small group planning.

Another perceived this negatively.

> Most decisions are made at the administrators' level--orders come down: "This has to be--get it done!" The administration has a fixed process--a desired outcome--in mind. They'd like consensus, but when push comes to shove we knuckle under. They are known as the "administrative" people.

Routinization of Decision Making in School C

Staff members of several years' tenure reported that the decision-making process had changed. Fewer heuristic decisions were being made at the time of the study than had been made during the initiation stage of the innovation. Less decision making was actually going on. Some felt that there was less participation by

the staff than there had been and that the process had become more authoritarian in character. They pointed to several items of evidence. First, meetings of the cabinet and of the committee had become fewer.

Second, there was a lack of intensity about the issues. The matters viewed as most contentious were issues such as student skipping and computer operations. One teacher said, "We rarely get excited anymore about the 'big' issues. Things have quieted down."

Third, those who in the early stages of the innovation had been much involved and very influential had either left the school or had become less active. Role positions, such as that of assistant principal, had been filled by applicants from outside the school, or the influentials had become exhausted from the high level of participation and had withdrawn somewhat. Some of these influentials regretted the change.

> Most decisions are now made at the administrative level. It is contrary to our philosophy. This causes unhappiness because there is an important difference between living through something and being forced to do it. When we discussed things on even terms, it made for better decision making. But now we are "gophers."

Others regretted the loss of influence by such people, but understood that the evolution was inevitable.

> The trouble is that we have so much to do. It is hard to interact with the other coordinators and team leaders. Before, everyone could handle problems of the entire school through interaction. But now that is disappearing.

> We are beginning to rest on our laurels. Things have become static. It is difficult to make institutionalized changes. People are getting comfortable and change becomes a threat to one's safety.
>
> Others did not regret the change.
>
> It is necessary to be flexible. We are still holding on to our philosophy but the old "free-wheeling" days are gone. A little authoritarianism is not a bad thing. We need to make sure that things are done.

Fourth, more downward communication directives were believed to exist than there had been previously. Teachers perceived increasing pressure from the community, the school board, and the district office. This pressure was translated either into direct decisions or into decisions which the principal interpreted as being necessary. There was some sympathy for the principal's position. A teacher said, "While he does a good job, more and more he is being hemmed in by others."

Satisfaction with Decision Making in School C

Generally, there was a high level of satisfaction among the staff--even among those who had reservations. All staff valued the ease with which they could raise issues and have them discussed, the ease of access to decision makers, the high level of two-way communication, the relative absence of dogmatic directives, and the sincerity of the attempt to search for consensus.

Among the less satisfied, the process was seen as too slow and indecisive. They would have preferred a process by which conflict could be resolved quickly by the principal more frequently handing down a decision.

> I think there is too much involvement. I get frustrated. The teachers get frustrated. The principal has the right to make the decision. There must be an appropriate mix of consensus and decision by the principal.

> A school of this kind must try to operate by consensus. But there are differences and someone must say. For individualized instruction to work there must be involvement of the staff, but in the final analysis there must be closure. It doesn't happen enough that someone finally says, "This is the way we are going to do it."

A consequence of this frustration was that some teachers or groups of teachers sometimes made their own decisions. A coordinator said,

> I sometimes get impatient and frustrated. So I set up the standard by which we will operate in our area. It causes tensions when different behavior codes exist but I see no help for it.

The high level of decision activity and some perceived consequences was a cause of dissatisfaction for some staff. They felt while School C was of a type which required more matters to be decided in relation the school philosophy than in a traditional school, too often decisions, once made, were not thoroughly implemented.

> I think there are too many decisions made and there is not enough follow through. We need to simplify our decisions and then follow through with the decisions.

The perceived disadvantages notwithstanding, there was a high level of satisfaction with the decision-making process for three reasons.

First, a high degree of trust and rapport had developed among staff which facilitated program development according to the school's philosophy.

> The whole group makes the decisions. In other schools it is one man's decision. I go along with lots of the decisions because of the way the decision has been made even if I disagree with it. But if the administration said, "Do this," I'd reject it.

Second, the staff was highly committed to the program. They spoke of "the high level of interest" in the school, of teachers "feeling part of" the program, of "high morale," of teachers being "protective" when the school was under attack. It was generally felt that teachers worked very hard--"harder here than elsewhere."

Third, the process was seen as responsible for much of the success which the school had in conceiving and implementing its philosophy and program. The principal concluded,

> One of the keys to the development of this program and its ultimate success has been the involvement of staff in the development of the system and in the solution of problems.

School D

Decision making at School D is described in terms of the change stage of the innovation, administrative structures and groups, the centralization of decision making, the routinization of decision-making, and satisfaction with the decision making.

Stage of Program Change in School D

School D was in its third year of operation. The progress of the school's development had followed a pattern which matched the innovation stages of change in an organization. At the time of the study, the innovative program was in the implementation stage.

During the first year, the principal, staff, students and parents had evaluated the philosophies and practices of traditional senior high schools and determined where those schools were not accomplishing their goals effectively. A school philosophy consisting of twenty "we agree" statements had been developed and accepted as the basis for decision making. Examples were:

> We agree that high schools can be impersonal bureaucracies; therefore we will organize into several more manageable and personable units. Activities and personal interactions which enhance members of the school community will be encouraged.
>
> We agree that each learner has unique and divergent needs; therefore, a wide range of alternatives will be offered including options as to what learning objectives will be pursued and options regarding how objectives will be met.

Because it was a new institution, the school had moved immediately into the initiation stage of the innovative process: an instructional program had been devised, and the administrative structures intended to facilitate the program had been created.

The school opened with ninth grade students only in the first year. The size of school, student and faculty, tripled in that time.

Innovations which were being implemented included an instructional program incorporating such items as competency-based instruction, variable credit, reporting to parents, community based education, interdisciplinary teaming, optional learning activities to minimize failure, and career education programs. A teacher-advisor program was beginning to function as intended. The administrative organization facilitated small-group decision making and

participation of all those affected by the decision, and facilitated attempts to reach consensus.

The school was committed to a philosophy of change as necessary. Furthermore, because of unexpected problems, and sources of resistance among personnel within the school which were encountered as the program was being introduced, disequilibrium among staff was high.

The Administrative Structures and Groups in School D

Administrative structures and groups at School D included administrative staff, the program improvement council, the budget advisory council, the student forum, parents, advisor groups, units, faculty meetings, subject departments, and districtwide bodies.

Administrative Staff

Administrative staff consisted of the building principal, four assistant principals, and the business manager.

While the principal assumed the administrative responsibilities usually associated with the role and accepted ultimate responsibility for all matters, he placed highest priority on program development. He said, "The focus of the decision making for me is the pretty heavy program and conceptual staff. I have to try to make a creative decision--'the one out of the box'."

Administrative responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school was delegated to the assistant principals who were

responsible for the designated buildingwide areas of responsibility, such as the master schedule, substitute teachers, data processing and reporting to parents and administration of one unit. They also supervised specified areas of the curriculum.

The assistant principals were perceived to be the "nuts-and-bolts" people; the principal was seen as the administrator whose vision and creativity was responsible for the process which developed the school's philosophy, program, and administrative structures and processes. There were several key elements in the principal's approach.

First, policy and implementation decisions had to be made in relation to what the staff believed as a group. He said,

> If you can reach some agreement--out there on the table first--it is an efficient process, first because people are not fighting it all along the way, and secondly, because it most probably will result in more creative decisions. It also produces a kind of moral thing. When we say, "Well, if we really believe that," or if we say, "What we have been doing for so long is not consistent with what we said," then we have to put a new twist on our program to bring it into line with what we really believe.

Thus, top priority was given during the formative stages of the school's development to the shaping of a set of "we agree" statements which became the school's philosophy. Secondly, the principal said "all those affected by the decision should have the opportunity to shape it." This belief called for the involvement of staff, students, and parents in addition to the administrators. Third, better decision resulted when an attempt was made to reach a consensus of the

best thinking of all participants. The concept of consensus was defined by the principal thus:

> Consensus is a process, an attempt to come as close as you can to a recommendation that all members of the group can support. You are working toward 100 percent. You won't get it. But if you can modify a proposal so that five more people can support it--then that is what the consensus process is. You shape and re-work a proposal and you try to get as many as possible to say "Yes." I'm opposed to putting a plan forward and having a vote.

Fourth, involvement in the decision-making process created understanding and commitment. "Ownership" of the school policies by all staff was the desired outcome. Again, the principal said,

> Ownership is the key outcome. You have to have that as a goal else it leads to failure. This staff, heavily independent, is not about to do something because "the boss" says to do it. Thus it is important that we have a maximum amount of understanding of, and commitment to, the outcome. This is important because high school teachers, once they get into classrooms, are by themselves. There is no way to monitor what they do--no supervisory staff to observe them frequently. So what they do on their own depends on their understanding and their belief in what they are doing. The goal is to get everyone--realistically this is not obtainable--to own the program.

Fifth, people at all levels in the organization have expertise which can be trusted. The decision-making organization therefore, was designed to be flat.

These beliefs resulted in the establishment of the structures and processes which are next described.

The Program Improvement Council

Membership on the council consisted of a unit principal, a certified staff member, a student and a parent elected to represent each unit, an elected classified staff member, and one other teacher with program expertise. Members elected their own chairman. The council met every two weeks.

The primary function, program improvement, required that the council assess schoolwide needs; set long range goals and plans; and approve and monitor new policies, new programs, and the annual expenditure plan. During the year preceding the study, the council had considered such matters as a policy on minimum competencies, programs for career education and living skills, arrangements for a student smoking area, and an "off-campus" policy for students.

Besides the policy-making function, the council had an implementation function. Most often, the council established task forces for this purpose. Task forces consisted of six to eight volunteers: parents, teachers and students, who served until the task force had gathered information; obtained student, parent, and staff opinion; and made a recommendation on the specific issue. In its brief history, School C had utilized more task forces than any other school staff members were aware of. Program elements which recently had been considered by task forces were: the reporting-to-parents form, the nine-week calendar, and the place of a "sustained silent reading program" in the daily schedule.

Although the program improvement council was intended to be the most important decision-making body of the school, it had not yet met fully the expectations which had been set for it. The council had not made an adequate asssessment of needs on which to base long-range goals. Membership had not achieved stability. Student involvement was less than had been hoped for, because the communication process between student representatives and the student forum was not yet fully effective. Teacher representatives did not have enough time to ascertain staff feelings adequately. Furthermore, the council met only twice a month so that the principal had to make many decisions which the council might otherwise have made.

Some placed a high value on the program inprovement council.

> It is an attempt to have decisions come from within the people who are involved--not from without. What it does is to view program proposals from the perspectives of students and their parents. It is the most considerate and feeling body I have seen in a school.

Others valued it less highly. Teachers new to the school who had not seen the council in operation for a year were cautious in evaluating it. Others were disappointed that the council meetings were not as dynamic, involving all members, as they would have liked. One respondent stated, "So far I have seen the principal making most of the decisions. I have not seen the members making the decisions. Maybe it is too early."

The Budget Advisory Council

The council was responsible for recommending an annual expenditure plan to the program improvement council. Membership consisted of the business manager, staff, students and parents representing each unit, and others elected or appointed at large. The principal was chairman of council meetings which were held irregularly. Administrative responsibilities of the business manager included such items as purchasing, budget control, and supervision of custodians.

The budget advisory council did not have decision-making power; it could only advise and make recommendations based on the priorities established by the program improvement council which reflected the impact of staff, student, and parent input.

School D had been delegated much autonomy for fiscal decision making. District policy was to decentralize management systems. This had been facilitated by the appointment of the budget manager and by not flagging allocations for specific purposes. The budget advisory council had not functioned effectively in taking the priorities set by the program improvement council and using its budgetary autonomy because "we have always drastically overspent our budget each year." In these circumstances the principal made budget decisions after he had received as much input as possible from those concerned.

Parents

Parents participated in the decision-making process through their representation on the program improvement council, associated committees, and the school advisory forum.

The school advisory forum was intended to serve the dual purpose of representing parent opinion and concerns to the school and serving as a sounding board. Membership consisted primarily of volunteer parents and, in addition, selected teachers and student representatives. The group met monthly. Attendance was low, and it was considered not to have met its intended goals.

Parents only became involved if a big issue arose, or as one teacher said, "If there is something wrong." Efforts to involve parents via letters or telephone calls had failed. Individual parents had responded readily to calls for assistance on ad hoc task forces if they felt the need to participate in a specific issue, but they were not willing to come to a regular meeting that might have had no point. The advisory forum needed credibility as a body which could be effective.

Opinions regarding parental contributions to the decision-making process were mixed. Some felt that parents did not know enough about educational issues, while others acknowledged that parents contributed to the decision-making process.

> Their positive contribution is limited. They have served us best by reacting to what is put before them on the table and they have also helped us by

> asserting which needs they believe are important to them. They have helped in indicating likely parental reaction to proposals which come from within the school, e.g., that a student smoking area be provided. They probably saved our necks on that one in terms of community acceptance.

Others did not always value the participation of parents. As a teacher said, "Sometimes you are cramped when nonprofessionals are present. You can't be open. You are much less apt to say what you think when parents are there."

Others thought that parents were not only unnecessary but also slowed down the decision process, particularly in discussions about operational decisions felt to be the domain of the professional educator.

> We should speed up the process. There are some areas where parents don't understand the complexity of the situation. I mean expenditure and curriculum matters. Course development items are the business of teachers. Parents need not be involved in a decision as to what should be taught in social studies.

The Student Forum

The student forum dealt with issues concerning students. Membership consisted of one student elected from each advisor group, a unit principal, a student representative from each unit, and, if appropriate, student representatives from other councils.

Members of the student forum served as a liaison with their advisor groups. Matters discussed included bicycle theft, food service, and similar housekeeping issues.

The student advisory forum had just begun to function, hence, the goals set for it had not yet been achieved. Although it was not yet fully effective and the students had yet to learn the constraints on decision making, it was valued as another source of student input. A teacher said,

> It works to a point. Students always want to change more than is feasible, more than there is money for, more than the community will accept. But their pressure for a smoking area brought results. Their views were considered, and I think that is good.

Advisor Groups

The basic component of the entire organization was the advisor group. Each group consisted of 20 to 25 student advisees from one grade with a teacher-advisor. The student chose an advisor, the relationship had to be acceptable to both, and time was provided each day for them to meet. The advisor, advisee and parents met at least twice a year to evaluate and plan the student's educational program. Advisors assumed responsibilities for the students' educational and career planning and personal and social growth.

The advisor program was important in the school's decision-making process for the following reasons. First, teachers became involved in the total school program because they heard so much about its implementation in other subject areas.

Second, identification of major student concerns occurred quite readily.

> We are just beginning. My group has just begun to discuss the problems of open campus, food service, and the like. Identification and discussion of issues, such as student cheating or the behavior of a teacher in class, is important.

Third, the small scale of the advisor groups enabled students to give informal input to the decision-making process. They had easy access to unit principals, and hence to the administrative staff than was possible in traditional schools. Furthermore, the unit principals and the building principal taught classes and conducted advisor groups. As a result, they were closer to the students and better informed about their needs than otherwise they would have been.

Fourth, there was time for "human interaction." Although some teachers were not comfortable with the closeness of the relationship, it was highly valued by most.

> There is time to get away from academics, to relate to people on a human basis. The identification of the student with the advisor, and vice versa, is surprising. But there are still some staff who hold the "I'm up here, you're down there" attitude.

Two performance gaps were perceived. The first was that not all teachers were willing or able to undertake the role responsibilities for advising. Some did not do it well. The second was that while the administrative structure provided for representatives from each advisor group to attend the student forum, this committee did not meet very frequently.

Units

Each unit consisted of one-fourth of the student enrollment and faculty, approximately 325 students from all grades and 16 staff members. Staff were assigned to units so that there was a cross section of teachers from each of the curricular areas, and a balance among the sexes, experienced and new teachers, and a heterogeneous mix of educational philosophies. Students belonged to the same unit as their advisor. An attempt was made to maintain stable membership to enhance personal contact and facilitate effectiveness in dealing with individual problems.

The units did not have an instructional function--it was not intended that they should. Neither did they have autonomy in deciding day-to-day operational procedures which reflected different interpretations of the school's philosophy. The functions which they did perform related to unit management counseling and building-wide policy and management issues.

The unit principals had been delegated responsibility for the management of the day-to-day operations of teachers and students in their units. They evaluated teachers within the unit, developed rapport and working relationships among them, and dealt with individual problems of teachers and students. A unit counselor worked with both students and teachers in the units and advisor groups. Opinions regarding these arrangements were highly favorable.

> My strongest tie is to my unit principal. I go to him for matters regarding discipline and transportation and scheduling. He is my liaison to the principal.

> He is also a decision-making person in himself for day-to-day operations. I like that. There are three persons there. My counselor, my unit secretary, and my unit principal. They are my people, concerned about me. I can always get an answer, or an avenue to get what I need.

A student who had been enrolled at several high schools reported: "It's a lot easier to get to a counselor in this school than in any other school I know."

The unit organization was valued for another reason.

> It forces [the unit principals] from their disciplinarian role--they only have to deal with one-quarter of the students, and it forces them to undertake the operational role to help teachers and students. It will keep good people who are excited about education in the administration game, because they are not disciplinarians all the time. I see it from a morale point of view. They are not seen by the students just as a threat--the bad guy. It makes for a healthier environment.

Faculty Meetings

The unit organization facilitated consideration of problems on a smaller scale than was possible in the large faculty meeting. Meetings of the total staff were called only for presenting information about which the administrators wanted everyone to have the same understanding, e.g., discipline policy or procedures for reporting to parents. Meetings of the full staff were occasional and irregular. Unit meetings occurred quite regularly.

> A large faculty meeting makes it tough to get down to the details. The unit of 20 teachers--each with 25 kids who they are talking to each day--is a good concept. It allows for good communication between administrators and teachers and their students. We sit down and discuss curriculum and grades and open classrooms.

Issues discussed were those raised by teachers or by the administrative staff and the program-improvement committee.

> The unit faculty meeting has provided a setting where issues can be clarified with maximum participation which one does not get in a total staff meeting. The issues which we want fully discussed we take to unit meetings. For example, orientation activities about the special education program are better done in the units. Our staff prefers it.

The unit faculty meeting had not functioned actually to decide policy for the unit. It was generally felt that staff members were not secure enough to do that yet. If they made a decision they wanted it to be a staffwide one.

The level of teacher participation in buildingwide decisions was perceived to be very high, although willingness to participate differed among teachers according to the priorities which they gave to their several roles or according to the nature of the issue.

Teachers who were new to the developing school, whether or not they were new to the profession, gave higher priority to their teaching and their teacher-advisor roles, than they gave to schoolwide decision making. As one said, "Time is a giant problem for most teachers. My first requirement is to develop my own territory. When that is done I can integrate it into the whole school."

While some teachers wanted to have a say no matter what the issue, others were not willing to participate in decisions which related primarily to procedural matters.

> There are some issues on which the majority of the staff doesn't give a damn so long as they are given

> a decision. They tend to be procedural things--the means of getting there. Teachers don't want to be put through a committee process for that.

A justification for this position was offered by the principal.

> High school staff consider themselves to be more professional than others do. They believe that they know what is good for themselves and for their students, and that they should be left alone. Therefore, they are impatient with procedural matters--it is not important to them.

Subject Departments

During the evaluation and initiation stages of the school's development no subject departments or departmental chairpersons were envisaged. Several reasons were given for this.

> We were small to begin with. It didn't make sense to operate separately. Better we thought, to operate together without a chairperson.

> Initially, our philosophy was that we should have a crossdisciplinary curriculum. The fear was that each department, were it established, would become its own little group and the "cross" would not eventuate.

> We wanted instructional activity to be entirely the business of individual teachers. We have given them a lot of freedom to teach given courses as they think best.

Groups of teachers in like areas, e.g., unified arts (photography, ceramics, drawing art, woodwork, and technical drawing) were responsible for developing programs. Each assistant principal had been assigned a number of subject areas and was responsible for encouragement, stimulation, and supervision of course development.

Recommendations about courses were made to them. The intention, however, was that the program improvement council eventually would assume responsibility for final approval of courses and for initiating curriculum directions. However, subject coordinators had been appointed just prior to the time of the study.

> The principal tried to persuade teachers to accept the idea of having time off when they needed it to order books and things like that, and to spread the duties around--not load them onto one person. But he couldn't persuade them. Teachers said they didn't have time. So he paid them. They still sought department chairpersons.

Perceptions regarding the functions and justification for chairpersons varied. Some appeared unperturbed and perceived departments as inevitable in a growing school.

> We have just appointed departmental chairpersons for each subject. But, given energy limitations, we will still be relying on each teacher's feeling. The departmental people will have responsibilities for developing programs in their areas and for making recommendations to the program improvement council. The former will do the work, but final adoption will rest with the latter.

Others remained unconvinced.

> The staff claims that we need a program leader in each subject area. My view is that that is not where program development takes place. It takes place when an individual teacher sees the need to change. A program coordinator is not a facilitator of change--he is an administrator.

> There is need for leadership in the curriculum areas. But I'd rather have it played down than allow the departments to have the influence they have in other schools, because in a highly departmentalized organization isolationism definitely happens. It is not good for students. Teachers in a strongly departmentalized structure really think only in terms of their department

> and their subject matter. Their concern is not for the student as a whole but as a mathematics or physical education student. So their curriculum ends up being unrealistic. Here, we are about the business of providing an integrated education for these kids.

Others felt that there was reasonable justification for the appointment of coordinators.

> We have to have someone responsible for seeing that there are enough courses for high and low ability students, that there are enough college bound courses, and such like. Without a meeting of people with common interests, concerns, and teaching expertise, that is impossible. The units cannot do that because they spread subject specialists. We need both.

School Board and District Office

School Board and district office policy was that problems were best solved at the school level, and that schools within the district should be allowed to develop their own and different educational philosophies. Very few specific parameters were imposed. The "expectation" existed that programs should reflect the best thinking possible in terms of research, that major decisions had better involve students and parents, and that basic skills ought to be taught. While individual board members had particular biases, e.g., for rigorous discipline, there was not enough consensus to make an impact.

Staff valued highly the fact that the board had never attempted to influence decisions and that teachers could innovate and take risks with new practices. Almost everything that had been introduced in the school had been done without first seeking approval from the board.

Centralization of Decision Making in School D

The major decisions were made by the principal although his objective was that the program improvement council should become the main decision-making body in the school. His own perception, and that of his staff, was that he was a "heavy influence" in all major policy decisions. All financial program and course recommendations were finally approved by him. He was the "filtering point" through which recommendations from the councils and other decision-making groups passed.

The principal exercised his authority both indirectly and directly. Staff members said,

> There are very few times when he makes a final decision. He makes a lot by influencing. It is a subtle thing. His human relation skills and his ability to work with a group are remarkable.

> Members of the program improvement council have been given to understand that there will be times when the principal will have to override their decisions. And that there may be things that he cannot share with them. He has the veto power because of his responsibility. He controls the meetings.

Sometimes the principal made decisions contrary to the recommendation of a task force.

> Many decisions are made unilaterally in the main office. That's not wrong. But sometimes when an ad hoc committee reaches a recommendation it is not carried out. In the end, after all the work, it comes out as the principal wants it to be.

At other times decisions did not appear to be made within the structures or according to the processes which had been established.

> The philosophy is very specific as to how the decision making will be done, via committees. The principal will not make the decisions, but students, parents, teachers and the administration will make them together. But at times, organizational things are decided without committee participation, and that is contrary to our philosophy.

Not all teachers understood the process. Some were confused because final decisions were not always to their liking and they had expected that such would have been the outcome of the consensus mode of decision making. Others, not understanding that the process was important, preferred authoritarian modes of decision making.

> Some people have a difficult time with this model. Those who come from traditional viewpoints don't want this kind of shared decision making. They want to know where they are headed. They are not used to going without an answer. We say, "There isn't an answer; we must keep working at it." They say, "Give me the answer."

The principal acknowledged that the declared policies were not always followed, and that this caused confusion.

> Right now, the staff is really confused over where the power is. In their other schools they knew where the power was. Right now they think it lies in me. I'm trying to wean it away. My assistants have to pick up power. All of us have had most of our experience in traditional schools.
>
> It is a long and difficult process to internalize all the different things that are happening. They are nervous about some issues, so it falls back on me. But my perception is that we have not done badly in involving students parents and teachers in shaping the program decisions.

Routinization of Decision Making in School D

Creative decision making in School D was given high priority by the principal.

> We have tried to make creative decisions. If we come up with one that is traditional--that is okay--no one has said it is wrong. But we have analyzed what the options are.

Other elements of the process also favored heuristic decision making. The school philosophy emphasized the need for continual reassessment of student needs and evaluation as to how the program was meeting them. Conflict of opinion was not avoided; for example, unit membership was deliberately composed of teachers of different philosophies; teachers were entirely responsible for the development of courses; no formal procedures existed for monitoring the selection of objectives or materials, utilization of space, or variation of credit; and faculty meetings were not regularly scheduled but were called only in response to needs expressed by staff and administrators.

The expectation however, was that a degree of routinization in the decision-making process would occur. Three factors were mentioned. First, as conceptual issues were decided, the pressure on the administration to hand down procedures was becoming stronger.

Second, while the parameters within which teachers devised courses were very broad, as the school became bigger it was expected that their curriculum options would become fewer--especially as courses that "worked" were developed and when several teachers

taught the same course someone would have to "say what was to be done."

Third, it was widely felt that staff could not much longer sustain the high level of creativity and involvement in which they had engaged for three years. One respondent said,

> It is physically enervating. We are all tired because of too much involvement. There are so many elements in the change process. We don't ever see an end to problems. We shall have to accept that change will always be with us. But we have not been realistic--we have been involved in so many things. What we have not talked about is the need for patience to achieve what we want to do. Anxiety is built in when you know a better way and it can't be there tomorrow. That is what causes the "burn out."

Staff who were appointed when the school began recalled that the small group of teachers who then made the decisions had "fantastic power." Then, as the school became larger and consensus became harder to get "issues were debated sometimes for months until the principal was forced to make the decision." The expectation was that this trend would continue.

Satisfaction with Decision Making in School D

Some aspects of the decision-making process were highly satisfactory to all respondents in School D. They valued the ease with which staff could raise concerns and have them discussed, the autonomy that was given to teachers in the classroom, the importance that was attached to teachers' input when buildingwide policy and programs were considered, and the ease of access which teachers had to administrators.

The willingness of administrators to listen had reduced discontent to a point where it was "far less here than in any other school."

Involvement of student, parents, and staff in the decision-making process was satisfactory to most respondents. They valued it because the community was represented, student voices were heard, and it was salutary for teachers.

Satisfaction with the consensus and group process mode varied. Two groups could be identified. Those who expressed satisfaction, approved of the process qua process, and generally approved of what had been achieved so far--even though they had some reservations, and those less than satisfied who either disapproved of the philosophy or had strong reservations about its implementation.

The first group expressed satisfaction that the consensus mode had been retained as a process, that voting on issues had been avoided, and that the attempt to seek maximum "ownership" of decisions was still maintained.

> It is important that the process be gone through. We have been successful in avoiding votes, we have been successful in involving people in the process, and we have been successful in giving most of them a sense of ownership. They feel they belong to the action. Those who oppose the final decision at least had a chance to shape it.

Their satisfaction was qualified by failure of the units to assume any degree of autonomy, incipient departmentalization of instruction (which they felt to be a step away from total staff involvement in the program) failure of the process to achieve ownership of decisions,

and reluctance by other staff to accept the consensus mode. They understood that sometimes the group process did not always work.

> We try our best in this school to communicate, to get feedback, to shape our decisions on all items. But let's face it, it can't be done all the time and therefore decisions are left to those in a position to make decisions. They have a better overall view than each individual does. They have their priorities and they have to worry about logistics. This is not a negative view. It is realistic.

The second group expressed dissatisfaction with the process because it did not meet their expectations as to how decisions ought to be made. Some felt uncomfortable because their experience in traditional schools had not prepared them for participation in decision-making process of this kind. They expressed confusion and anxiety. A teacher new to the school said,

> I'm a traditional person. I went to a traditional school and university; taught at a traditional school--that's all I was ever involved with. I'm uncomfortable with loose ends; I like to know where I am; I am still uptight if I think things might fail. I get frustrated because I don't know where I am headed.

The slowness of the process and the anxiety and frustration which it sometimes caused was a problem not only for those who disliked the process but for those who supported it.

> Both the traditionalists and the visionaries are frustrated by the slow pace. The traditionalists want to know what the goal is and would prefer not to be put through the process. The visionaries are frustrated because they know what the goal is and are impatient that it takes so long to reach it.

Other teachers preferred that decisions be made by voting because, as one said, "It is final and each staff member knows where the others are."

Some were dissatisfied because they perceived the process to be unnecessarily slow and inefficient. They resented the frequency of calls on their time which they felt would have been better used for instructional purposes. As one said, "Now that we know where we are conceptually and have that in common we should be able to find out what we have to do without any discussion."

Dissatisfaction over the amount of time required for the process was expressed by everyone. They reported that in a developing school with so much to be done there was insufficient time to carry out the process completely.

> The best we can do [as representatives on the council] is to 'sense feelings." What is needed is quality time to talk to each other. We don't have time to do it properly. The consequence is that for most of the time staff can only be reactive rather than proactive in the decision process.

School E

Decision making at School E is described in terms of the change stage of the innovation, administrative structures and groups, the centralization of decision making, the routinization of decision making, and satisfaction with decision making.

Stage of Program Change in School E

School E was in its eighth year of operation, although the evaluation and initiation stages of the innovation process had begun two years prior to the opening of the school as part of a

districtwide endeavor to create several model schools for curricular, advisory, and staffing patterns for other schools in the district.

At the time of the study the innovation process had reached the routinization stage and was characterized by ongoing activities which were fully integrated into the organization. As well, re-evaluation was occurring, as it had continuously throughout the initiation and implementation stages.

The school had not waivered from its goal of utilizing methods and techniques which were responsive to the individual and societal needs of its students. It had modified the model developed during the initiation stage.

First, the program initially had provided each student with opportunities for self-paced continuous progress through each course in each subject of the curriculum. It was felt, however, that not all students were able to take advantage of that methodology and that not all subjects could be taught most effectively in that way. In keeping with the philosophy of providing for individual differences, the curriculum was amended to provide both individual and group oriented instruction in some subject fields.

Second, reevaluation of course offerings was also a feature of the school's curriculum development program. Annual reviews of the program had occurred each summer and new course offerings were developed. The courses were not always confined to traditional subject areas, but crossed them if appropriate.

Third, the policy which had allowed students a considerable degree of freedom to attend classes had been revised in response to community pressure. The principal said,

> Individualization of programs can vary. But the constant searching for individualization is what is good. It is an attitude--a facilitative environment if you like. It is difficult to get everyone to understand the concept of it. It may mean different ways of achieving different ends or achieving similar ends. Certainly, it's not just self-pacing.

The program at the time of the study included such features as a nongraded curriculum, multi-level courses which allowed students to commence at the level of ability most appropriate to their needs or interests, multi-activity courses, and special programs such as those designed to assist students attain basic skills or college entrance requirements or to develop independent research skills, etc. Also, a teacher-advisor system was in place.

Administrative Structures and Groups in School E

School E utilized several decision-making structures: administrative staff, faculty meetings, ad hoc committees, subject departments and departmental chairpersons meetings, teacher advisor groups, parents and districtwide bodies.

Administrative Staff

Administrative staff consisted of the principal, the vice-principal, and the administrative assistant. The vice principal had two areas of responsibility, discipline and facilities. The

administrative assistant was responsible for student scheduling (which could change frequently as students completed units at different rates) and maintenance of student records. All other curricular decisions and day-to-day operational decisions were made by the principal. The vice principal and the administrative assistant functioned only in an advisory capacity.

The key decision maker in the school was the principal. He was the "creative stimulator" and the "idea man with the vision" who gave direction to the philosophy of instructional programming for the individual student at School E. He was seen as the "catalyst" whose approach to decision making implemented that philosophy.

There were three main dimensions of the principal's decision-making approach. The first was that decisions had to be agreed to by the faculty. The principal said,

> You must have some organization and it can only stem from the understanding as to where we are. A philosophy is essential, and it must be worked out for as long as it takes to reach consensus. The IGE and Kettering literature have been saying that for years. After our experience in this school we know that you can do it and that you had better do it.

The staff confirmed that the principal used the school's philosophy as the touchstone for making decisions. Some felt however, that the philosophy was too broad and open for consistent interpretation. One teacher said,

> The philosophy is so broad. In our department we do much that is against the original philosophy. We still offer some self-paced classes and continuous

> progress for a few students, but for the majority we offer group-paced courses taught in the traditional mode.

Another said,

> He has allowed teachers to choose and has allowed the community to question some practices, so he backed off. Thus, we have some parts of the curriculum which follow the original pattern and others which do not.

The principal's response to these views was that while the basic philosophy should remain, it has to be altered in terms of what the community will stand and what is feasible.

> When we are planning each year's program with old teachers as well as the new, we say, "Let's review the philosophy in light of the new information and operationalize it." So that then we can say, "Yes, let us aim for that!" and then next step is to say, "Let's hold ourselves accountable to that."

The second dimension was that the principal and teachers together were the key decision makers. However, the principal could not abdicate his responsibility for being the curriculum leader and for making the final decisions. He said,

> I have tried to behave in a way which emphasizes the teacher's role, rather than implement mine or district-office directives. I have tried to keep them as uninhibited as I could.

The principal typically sought staff input into the decision-making process. One teacher said,

> He has a ready receptivity to ideas that come up from teachers. Providing there is some rationality about it, he will support you in trying out a new idea.

Another said,

> He has retained his receptivity to people and their ideas. His friendly disposition and informality

> toward them helps. You can always get to him. Sometimes I think he overdoes it--he is not good at pointing out weakness--but people feel they are valued.

While he was the prime mover in most of the issues and matters which were decided at School E, he always sought staff opinion. A respondent said,

> He always is out here [the staff room] asking us what we think. I can't think of any other school I have been in where it happens so often. The principal's office is not "up there" it is mostly where he is, "down here."

The principal, however, tended to discuss matters with selected influentials more than with the staff generally.

> In any school there are people more in tune, more knowledgeable, more skillful about what we are trying to do. So I listen to those influentials more than I do to others. I get accused, rightly, of establishing an elite. They have greater access to me. I trust them more.

Sometimes he sought staff input after he had made a decision.

> Teachers are often asked for their opinions. I'm satisfied that often he decides what ought to be done and then asks how we should do it. He is often ready to say, "This is what I want", and then is fantastic at getting staff responses.

Once a decision had been made, the principal was flexible enough to change the decision should it prove unworkable.

> I don't even feel that when a decision is handed down that is the end of it. It may not change, but most often there is room for discussion and opportunity for change. It doesn't happen like that in other schools of my experience.

The third dimension was that "alternative" decision-making structures may be dysfunctional. As the principal said,

> You must have some kind of structure. It was a deliberate decision not to create a program improvement committee or something like it because I feel that what is important is direct communication between me and the faculty and among individual teachers. Other structures get in the way.

Regarding alternative structures, the principal offered the justification that teacher time was limited and could be used more productively in the classroom; that once a committee was established it was "almost certain that it will go looking for an issue to solve," and that polarizations of philosophies occurred too readily in permanent decision-making structures.

He rejected the proposition that sub-schools be established. First, the school enrollment and faculty was small, so that adequate communication was possible.

Second, sub-schools or similar subdivisions of the staff and faculty were potentially diversifying.

> They set up islands which I do not like. Potentially, they are obstacles to total communication and thus we erode the possibility of considering ourselves as a total unit. The departmental structure is hard enough to overcome, to prevent people from seeing their subjects as one territory. I'd rather bring my 50 faculty as a total unit to be talked to by me. Decisions of any kind have to grow out of some common ground and respect and realization that we are all in this together.

A teacher summed up as follows: "Within the philosophy or the personality of this school there is no set of rules, no highly formalized structures for decision making."

Subject Departments

Faculty members were grouped into subject departments. Within the constraints imposed by the district office and the school philosophy, each subject department was free to make decisions regarding which courses would be offered, and which teachers would teach them, and operational matters, such as credit variations and grading procedures. Within these constraints each teacher had autonomy to make classroom-type decisions.

Each department had a team leader. They were paid a small sum, $400 a year, were given no released time, and had no formal positions. Their functions were to supervise the instructional program within their departments; to manage logistical matters, such as purchase of text books, allocation of the department's budget, etc., and to represent their teachers' concerns to the principal.

Team leaders were powerful persons in the decision-making process of both the subject departments and the school. Within the departments it was their decision whether courses should be developed, whether they should be self- or group-paced, which teachers should be assigned to teach them, etc. Their decisions were rarely questioned by the principal and they enjoyed his confidence.

Most team leaders fostered the concept of the "team." The departmental chairperson was seen as the "leader" rather than the "head," and all teachers in a department were encouraged to participate in decision making. One observer said,

> Strong team leaders received a lot of input and hence are able to know their teachers' needs. There is much more leading than directing. Few decisions are made without the agreement of all the teachers.

Subject departments met every two weeks to attend to the day-to-day operational requirements of their areas, to assist in policy formulation within their departments, to receive information from the principal as transmitted by the team leader, and to communicate their own concerns.

Regarding course development by the subject departments three aspects were significant. First, interpretation of the concept of individualized instruction varied considerably among departments. One teacher said,

> Decisions cannot be made outside of the school philosophy. But the biggest conflict we have had has been over the amount of each type of individualized instruction we can have. The philosophy supports the primacy of self-paced learning. But when we have a preponderance of teacher-dominated and group-paced instruction favored in our department, then we try to push for self-paced.

Second, the principal was involved in the decision-making process of the departments. At meetings with department staffs he outlined the school's philosophy and related it to the course offerings of the department. Some teachers perceived this to be an intrusion of the principal's wishes onto teachers. One said, "The principal determines what will be taught. If he wants a course he will get a course. He will help the teachers write up the curriculum and will provide the resources." Most other teachers perceived this to be a legitimate exercise of the principal's educational leadership function.

Third, subject departments cooperated to provide courses, often interdisciplinary, which were most suited for the students. The decision-making process which brought this about, and its attendant difficulties, was explained by the principal as follows:

> I cannot order people to work together. I cannot command them to work as an interdisciplinary team.
>
> Some think that the way to handle the traditional subject department and break teachers out of their subject-centered territories is to arrange for fewer unified subject departments. That doesn't work because people have these traditional concepts which are hard to erase and you create other kinds of territories which people want to defend.
>
> I can't legislate staff, but I can establish an environment which is conducive to people deciding to work together. To do that you have to have common ground--a school philosophy, departments which have respect for each other, and an understanding that subject department lines are not rigid. There is evidence that people are willing to work together across subject lines--not because it is imposed organizationally, but because it makes sense.

The staff cited many examples of subject department cooperation, such as the readiness of teachers to free students for band practice, a wilderness exploration course instigated by students and supported by several subject departments, and the foreign language department's assisting with a social science course which had been mandated as a graduation requirement.

Team Leader Meetings

The team leaders met regularly every two weeks with the principal although informally they met more often. The meeting was used by the principal as a major communication link between him

(and on occasion the district office) and staff members, and among subject departments.

The team leader meeting was an important structure in the decision-making process. Members had a more vocal platform than did individual teachers; they had easier and more regular access to the principal than individual teachers; and because of the confidence the principal had in their judgment he listened to them. In this regard, he said,

> I try to use the team leaders as sounding boards when I have ideas for things to be part of the school. There are times when I act without then. But I always try to seek a broader base for making a decision. Most times I make a better decision when I have their opinions.

Some felt, however, that the principal's interest was limited to listening to the concerns and not so much to the solutions offered and that the team leaders had little input in the form of recommendations. One team leader said,

> They [team leaders meetings] are informative--usually in the one direction. But solutions are almost never reached. The principal notes the problem and undertakes to reach the solution himself. Sometimes we recommend alternative solutions in small affairs. But almost never do we recommend one alternative on big issues.

Faculty Meetings

The full faculty usually met monthly, although meetings recently had become irregular. They were used by the principal to disseminate information and directives. Faculty meetings were rarely

used for discussing issues or making recommendations. Some teachers regretted this, saying,

> There needs to be more total faculty involvement so that ideas can be discussed from several perspectives. In this school people can feed in ideas as individuals, but never as a team. I liked it when the faculty came together and tried to solve problems for this reason. True, we used to break into clusters to avoid 60 people talking at once but we came together afterwards. Now there are no permanent organizations--just ad hoc ones.

Issues which arose at faculty meetings were either referred to the principal for a decision or to task forces established to make recommendations.

Faculty members were also involved in the decision making through frequent, informal communication with the administrators and each other. Staff felt free to raise concerns with the principal either on their own initiative or through team leaders. When asked what element of the decision-making process they valued the most, respondents valued the freedom to voice their opinions.

Also, the principal sought teacher participation in the decision-making process both before and after a decision had been made. The staff was generally of the opinion that they were consulted fewer times before a decision was made than in previous years, and that the trend was for the principal to reach a decision and then seek staff input as to its feasibility and appropriateness. All agreed, however, that decisions could be changed in the face of advice from the staff.

Task Forces

Ad hoc committees were frequently used for decision making in School E. Membership usually consisted of six to eight volunteers of teachers or administrators. They were established to make recommendations on an issue and then were disbanded. If concern remained over an issue, however, an ad hoc committee was reinstated, the issue reviewed, and other recommendations made. Matters which had been discussed by task forces in the year prior to the study included sex sterotyping curricular materials, scheduling of regular or irregular student visits to classes, student registration, articulation between School E and its feeder schools, and a new discipline code.

Task forces were valued for three reasons. First, ad hoc committees enabled staff members who wished to be active in the decision-making process to do so. Others were not put under pressure to become involved. Generally, there was a good response among faculty to volunteer as members and to provide information and opinions to help the ad hoc committees reach a recommendation.

Second, the staff generally valued the process, because teachers had a high degree of mutual respect for the expertise of fellow teachers on the staff.

Third, task force recommendations were heeded by the administration. As one teacher said, "If the faculty thinks something will work, e.g. modular scheduling, it will be implemented by mutual agreement and not by 'ramming it down our throats.'"

Sometimes, recommendations were accepted by the principal because he wanted to give task force recommendations a trial in accordance with his policy that teachers had to be involved in the decision-making process. The staff valued this acceptance just as they valued the lack of recrimination should a recommendation prove to be wrong.

Teacher-Advisor Groups

The student enrollment in School E was divided into 43 advisor groups, each with a staff member acting as a teacher-advisor. Teacher-advisors met daily with their advisees, came to know them on a personal basis, advised on scheduling and associated personal and social problems, and contacted parents or intervened with other staff on their behalf.

The system assisted the decision-making process because it provided teachers with feedback from students regarding which courses were fruitful, it made teachers aware of the graduation requirements and hence of the total school program, and it made them aware of students as "people."

> There is constant discussion between the advisor and advisee and between other teachers so that advisors are better informed about the needs of kids. Every kid gets attention.

Some respondents, however, regretted that the teacher-advisor system was not as productive of such communication as had been intended. First, meetings of the clusters--groups of teacher-advisors

with the counselor attached to the cluster--had been held infrequently and had not functioned effectively as a structure for decision making in this area of the program.

Second, the teacher-advisor system had not had an apparent impact on the curricular offerings provided by the school. Decision making within the subject departments regarding course offerings and instructional techniques had been unaffected. It was stated, "While it is excellent in solving students' problems with the curriculum it is ineffective in changing the curriculum."

The Parent-Teacher Association

Members of this organization consisted of interested citizens and parents. Its executive committee met monthly. The association functioned as an "advocate organization" to help the school obtain resources which it could not have maintained on its own and its major area of interest was the upkeep of the building. It was not concerned with instructional matters. In earlier years, however, it had functioned to enhance communication between the faculty and the community. The association had undertaken evaluations of the curriculum and had made recommendations to the school from a parental perspective as to what might and might not be taught. This function had lapsed.

The opinion of staff was that parent input was valuable during the school's formative years but was no longer necessary "now that the major issues have been decided." An alternative view was as follows:

> There is now such widespread understanding about what we are doing that there is no need. There are not as many issues which need to be explained--no big questions which we need parent support for. Besides, there is a good track record regarding entrance to college and achievement when our students get there that parents are not really concerned what we do.

School Board and District Office

Potentially, the school board and district office were able to have considerable effect on the decision-making process in School E. The district office had mandated course outlines and had established committees to approve new courses and all classroom materials. It assigned some teachers to the school, allocated budgets to the subject departments, appointed curriculum supervisors in each of the subject fields, and, on occasions, handed down directives on operational matters, such as a policy on student smoking.

District office involvement was not generally regarded as an imposition which seriously affected the school's decisional autonomy. First, the course guidelines had been devised by teachers within the district, flexibility of interpretation had been built into them, and the supervisors usually functioned as advisors and resource people.

Second, because it was a model school, School E had been granted some dispensation by the district office to redefine such items as Carnegie units and minimum graduation requirements so that its innovative instructional program would not be inhibited.

> The principal's interpretation is what matters. Strict interpretation of them is not essential, especially if we are looking for ways to help the students. If a principal wishes to define things differently it can be done.

Third, much of what the district office had mandated, such as minimum competency requirements and programs to help students attain them, already had been incorporated into the school's program. As one respondent pointed out wryly, "Now we are getting additional staff to do what we did before by ourselves."

Fourth, decisions regarding the school's instructional program were not inhibited and the staff was prepared to work around the district office directives. One said,

> I see district mandates not as obstacles--you can get over these things--but as an umbrella to do the things which you want to do. We include an "open segment" in each course which allows the teacher and the student together to plan some independent study.

Some actions by the district office, however, had constrained the decisional autonomy of the school. First, the mandate that a core curriculum be provided meant that the school had to reallocate its resources to offer some subjects, e.g., domestic science, which were not high on the school's priorities.

Second, district office appointments of specialist teachers together with budget allocations for materials had dictated a part of the instructional program which should be developed. The principal's view was:

> I am a little uncomfortable with that [core curriculum, imposed subjects], because I think there needs to be a little anarchy in every curriculum. There is still a need

> for systemwide courses. But there is a little bit that shouldn't need approval. Each school should be able to exercise a little local control. OK, a school can introduce a course and get it approved, but I want to be able to be different.

Third, allocation of budgets to the subject departments by subject supervisors at the district office deprived the principal of the authority to make such decisions himself and so prevented him from taking curricular initiatives which he felt to be needed. Staff members whose departments were well financed supported this arrangement, but others regretted it.

> The supervisors become line men when they have control over money. They should be staff men. They do not have the local knowledge. We are in a better position to decide than they are. I'd prefer that the budget be given to the school so that I can decide. Now it is an impediment to my program development because I can't say what ought to be done with the money according to the philosophy of the school.

Fourth, the requirement that district office approval was required before textbooks could be used, limited the freedom of the school to implement new courses. Teachers felt that because their school was "different" they should not be constrained by a districtwide committee.

Centralization of Decision Making in School E

The decision-making process in School E was highly centralized. All of the major decisions were made by the principal in response either to concerns and issues raised by the faculty or to those which he perceived.

Few formal decision-making structures existed within the school. Those which existed met irregularly, often informally, and functioned primarily as communication links between the principal and the faculty. Only occasionally were buildingwide meetings held by these groups. The ad hoc committees had recommending power only, and the subject departments (while day-to-day management of their operations was delegated to them) still were required to seek approval of the principal for any policy and managerial proposals they might make.

> Most policies are told to us. But I never think there is a dictatorship in this school. Policies are fabricated in such a way that I never think I'm being persecuted. And this, I suppose, is because the administration has a lot of respect for teachers and the quality of their input.

Routinization of Decision Making in School E

Staff members of several years' tenure reported that the decision-making process had changed. Fewer heuristic decisions were being made at the time of the study than had been made during the initiation and implementation stages of the innovation; less procedural decisions were being made; more directives were coming from the principal; increasingly, staff opinion was being sought after proposed lines of action had been decided; and fewer formal meetings were held. Increasingly, the principal was proposing curriculum initiatives and the staff less.

> As a staff this year there has not been a cause or reason for us to get together to meet the administrators. We

> are showing less initiative and accepting more than we would have years ago. Then faculty meetings were marked by drama and cooperative contributions. Now we take it from the principal. Well not quite, but mostly we do.

Several reasons were cited for this change. First, there was a different composition of the staff. Several of the "aggressive and bright" teachers who belonged to the original staff had left the school--usually to district office or administrative positions, thus depriving the school of much of its original "think tank" of creative decision makers. The new staff members who had replaced them were younger, less experienced, and without the particular experiences of creating the innovative program and the workshop training and personal development which had accompanied it. Thus, the new staff tended to be more traditional and less imbued with enthusiasm for the program, and less skillful in creating or implementing it than the original staff had been.

Second, there was less initiative among those who remained of the original staff because they were "burned out." As a veteran said, "The creative ideal was what was important once. Now we are exhausted and have eased off--'burned out' you might say."

Third, parental pressures had inhibited creativity. Parents rejected much of the innovative instructional program because it did not meet their goals of having their children "graduate within the prescribed time" or "learn to obey decisions of those in authority." A counselor said,

> Parental pressure in the community on what we do here has made one defensive--less aggressive. Now, when I want to advise a student I go through the channels carefully first. Before I'd just do it.

Fourth, the amount of money, and hence staff workshops, had dwindled. Although there were still more of these than in any other schools of the staff's acquaintance, they had diminished to the point where there was little time for creative thinking--"just routine solving of routine problems."

Satisfaction with Decision Making in School E

Generally, there was a high level of satisfaction among the staff--even among those who were less satisfied with the decision-making process at the time of the study than had been during the earlier years of the innovation. First, they valued highly the opportunity to participate to the degree that they did. One said, "Here, the feeling is that we are achieving things and there is a commitment--not as much as there was in the past--but it is still there."

Second, they valued the openness of the process. One said,

> It might be very loose. In fact, I sometimes wonder if we have a process at all. But usually everything is out in the open. We all know what the issues are. This is the most open administration I have worked under.

Third, they valued highly the flexibility of the decision-making process. As one teacher said, "I like most the receptiveness on the part of the administration to try new ideas or old ideas that need a new try." Another said, "I don't ever feel that when a

decision is handed down that is the end of it. It may not change but most often there is room for discussion and opportunity for change."

Although the degree of centralization was high and staff participation was less than it had been, and more often was reactive, satisfaction with the decision-making process generally was high.

School F

Decision making at School F is described in terms of the stage of the program change, administrative structures and groups, centralization of decision making, routinization of decision making and satisfaction with decision making.

Stage of Program Change in School F

School F was in the ninth year of an innovative process to change the instructional program. This process had reached the routinization stage. The decision had been made to retain the innovation and it was fully integrated into the ongoing activities of the school.

The innovative process had been initiated as the result of a district office commitment to introduce a K-12 continuous progress program throughout the district, although the school had initiated attempts to implement team teaching and interdisciplinary approaches to instruction for several years prior to that. The staff members of School F joined districtwide committees established for the purpose of creating course outlines in each subject with the underlying

philosophy that grade levels would be eliminated and individual students would have opportunities for continuous progress with failure.

The staff of School F had then translated this philosophy into the school's instructional program. Instruction was organized into nine-week courses. Students were encouraged to complete them earlier if they could, but were not required to complete them within that time. Units of each course were outlined in learning packets which indicated appropriate grade levels, purposes, objectives to be achieved, subject matter, learning activities, and required performance tests. Instruction occurred in large group presentations, small study groups, or independent study. When a student completed the work requirement he was able to move to another class. A unit was completed when one took the requisite test. Because a student's progress differed according to the rate at which one learned, the schedule could be altered frequently. This was monitored each day by the teacher-advisor who also was available for personal and social counseling.

A feature of the innovative process was that each change had been widely discussed and a clear statement of its purposes and procedures was made known before it was implemented. Often, these were translated into instructions and systems developed to ensure understanding. This could be incorporated into the program with little uncertainty by the staff. The result was that the innovation process occurred with relatively less confusion than in other schools wherein less attention was paid to such enabling procedures.

The Administrative Structures and Groups in School F

Administrative structures and groups at School F included administrative staff, faculty and associated meetings, subject departments, teacher-advisor groups, parents, and districtwide groups.

Administrative Staff

The administrative staff consisted of the principal and four assistant principals. The principal was responsible for the overall administration of the school and for instructional leadership. Each of the assistant principals was delegated an area of responsibility--instruction, discipline, business management, and plant maintenance. Three members of the administrative staff, the principal and the assistant principal for instruction were most involved in policy making and its implementation.

The principal accepted responsibility for the decision-making policy which prevailed in the school. There were several aspects. First, he was required to operate within the parameters mandated by the district office. One teacher said, "He must keep them in mind. After that he has ultimate control."

Second, the school philosophy was the basis for all instructional and operational decisions made. The philosophy could not be changed, and the principal assumed responsibility for maintaining it. One teacher said, "He gives some givens. There must be a willingness on the part of the staff to accept or comply. I can't decide the philosophy . . . that is fixed."

For this reason there were no administrative subunits established in School F. The principal preferred a holistic approach to the administration of the school.

Third, the principal gave high priority to instructional leadership and "generating ideas." He and the assistant principal for instruction assumed responsibility for supervising the instructional methods used by teachers to ensure that the concept of self-paced learning and continuous progress by each student was implemented. They supervised the writing of material and the learning packets. One teacher said,

> He [the principal] is very concerned about methodology. He tries to make sure that teachers use varying methodologies. He shows teachers what can be done and provides them with self-development programs and curriculum instruction.

Another teacher reported,

> They [the administration] will come to you about a situation they have observed. For example, if you are not using enough small group instruction, or if they feel you are using too much lock-step teaching, they suggest you make changes and give advice. They mandate it. If you don't like it and you don't want to do it, then you can always leave. I agree with that. It is necessary if you are going to introduce a new program.

Fourth, the principal did not wish to maintain an authoritarian relationship with his staff. He valued their input and consulted them frequently. A pattern typically emerged. Staff members or the principal identified a problem or a concept and proposed solutions or methods of implementing the idea; the proposal was discussed with key personnel and other staff members whose opinion

was highly valued by the principal; and the issue was settled. As one said, "There is a brainstorming. Ideas are bounced off people. The principal gets their reactions, he internalizes those, and then he makes the decision."

Opinions were divided as to how much staff participation the principal allowed. Some felt that he encouraged and obtained much teacher participation. One said,

> The thing I like most about the decision-making process in this school is that the principal is honest when he says he does not want an "authoritarian relationship." When I have a problem or a bright idea the principal will always think about it. Sometimes he will allow people to try things which he thinks will not work out but which he feels ought to be tried if only because he wants to show that he really means what he says.

Others felt that he did not.

> I really don't think that he's been getting enough people in the school involved. Sometimes I think he tries to do too much by himself, or he relies too much on a few people.

Other respondents also felt, that he tended to consult only those who were willing to give time and effort to provide input into the decisions which had to be made or who thought like he did.

> I'm sure that there are people on the staff who are more influential than others. It doesn't worry me, however, because I can always go to the man if I have something to say. Those who gripe about the principal's over-reliance on a certain clique of people are usually those who want to have a say in every decision whether they are expert in the matter or not.

Faculty Meetings

Meetings of the full faculty were few. Those that were held were scheduled before classes began in the morning because of coaching or afternoon commitments. Full faculty meetings were only called when the entire staff needed to receive information or directives at once, or when it was desirable that the ideas of individual faculty or departments should be shared with all other members.

In lieu of faculty meetings, several structures were utilized to ensure staff input into the decision-making process or to ensure that the administrators obtained total staff opinions. First, ad hoc committees were established if an issue arose which required consideration by the full staff. A problem, such as how to handle tardy students, which had been raised at departmental or chairpersons' meetings would be assigned to a small committee of six to eight volunteers. When an ad hoc committee had made its recommendations it was disbanded. This device was valued by all who felt that it facilitated the opportunity for all staff to have input, the committee members did not get "tired," and the members did not become too influential in the school.

Second, the principal and assistant principals for instruction and discipline met regularly, usually every two weeks, with the members of each subject department. The schedule had been arranged so that the teachers in each department were released from teaching during the same period each day, thus allowing them to plan together and to meet as a group with the administrators. Items were placed

on the agenda either by the faculty or the administrators and were related to both buildingwide and departmental issues--mostly day-to-day operations items.

Administrators valued these meetings because it was easy to assemble the staff in small groups. They could get the "feel" of what staff members were thinking and also ensure that the school's philosophy was understood. Faculty valued the informality of these meetings because they permitted close contact with the administrators and thereby influenced the decision-making process. One teacher said,

> They are better than the full faculty meetings which are a pain. Communication of notices can be done just as well by written announcements. The time is too short to get any real chance to say what you think. The time is wasted. In these meetings we really have our say.

Others regretted that the absence of full faculty meetings precluded the full exchange of opinions among the faculty.

> It works well enough, but at times we need school-wide meetings of all the teachers in the departments so that each of us knows what the others are thinking--otherwise we are not able to share ideas. The give and take does not occur among us as it should.

Third, departmental chairpersons met with the administrators every three weeks or whenever the need arose. Membership also included the counselors and was extended if individual teachers were needed to make a contribution. Agenda items were raised by department heads in response to matters which concerned their teachers. The principal used the agenda to relay administrative directives and

information to the faculty, and to raise issues and seek perspectives regarding possible solutions. Agenda items were mainly day-to-day operational matters, although some, such as the question of requiring students to complete work units in a prescribed time (antithetical to the school philosophy) were related to instruction.

Formal meeting procedures were not allowed to inhibit the progress of meetings.

> It is all very informal. There is a lot of input from the departmental heads. We talk about what is needed to be done and how it might be done. The administrators get to know how we feel. We get to know how they feel. We reach a decision usually by it just happening. We know the sort of thing the administrators expect.

Fourth, teacher-advisors were clustered into three groups, each under the tutelage of one counselor. Meetings of teacher-advisors were called either by the counselor or by the administrators when matters relating to the teacher-advisor system needed to be discussed or information and directives needed to be transmitted from the principal. Such meetings did not occur very often (about every six weeks) although they were more frequent at the beginning of the school year.

The meetings were valuable because they helped teachers to understand their other role as advisors in such matters as college entrance requirements, identification of student needs, etc. One said,

> We get a lot of advice, direction, and help about teaching. Sometimes they just say "do it this way," but at least we know what is expected of us. In

> this [role] we are not so sure. There is not a lot of help available and few of us have had any formal training. So we value the meetings where we can find out what is required and occasionally where we can have input into the instructional program.

Administrators thought that the meetings assisted everyone to gain a broad perspective of the operation of the school and hence be in a position to make informed decisions.

Subject Departments

Responsibility for the day-to-day decisions about curriculum rested with the subject departments. Each department consisted of the subject teachers and a chairperson appointed by the principal. They were generally chosen for their affinity with, and capacity to support the school philosophy.

> The principal should retain control over appointments. In the setting of this school and in this district, you must retain control. We could not function without them because we do not know the real talents and expertise of the individual teachers who form the team. The nature of the training which teachers get does not prepare them for this kind of program and the principal does not have the final say in this selection [although his opinion is sought]. Someone must supervise the decisions they make.

Departmental chairpersons received no additional pay or released time for extra duties, although they had a reduced number of advisees. This responsibility was accorded high status, but no official role description existed. However, they were responsible for communicating between teachers and administrators and among other departments. They assisted in training student teachers and they supervised the instructional program.

Subject departments did not have full control of courses because the school was required to follow a prescribed, structured curriculum. The program outlines which had been developed district-wide for each subject were not like the curriculum "guides" typically found in school districts. Teachers were expected to cover the topics and to ensure that their students reached the specified achievement standards. Sometimes, this limitation hindered the school's capacity to innovate and was resented by the staff.

The staff enjoyed some autonomy. They were free to develop alternative methods of instruction (although the principal had to approve them before they were used), they constructed their own schedules, and, within the district requirements for class size, they were free to assign teachers and to group pupils as they thought appropriate. They controlled their own budget.

These decisional areas were seen to be important in the implementation of the school's philosophy, and the subject departments were regarded as crucial structures. Hence, deviation from the philosophy was viewed with some concern by the administrators, although they allowed variation to occur. The principal said,

> The departments do have personalities of their own. Some are more rigid than others--less likely to enthuse about self-paced learning. Others are too free or too creative and don't worry as much as I think they should about procedural matters.

Another observer said,

> There is much more staff involvement here than there is in other schools. The freedom he

> allows people to decide is phenomenal. He depends on his departments to set their own policies and so there is variation among the departments: one is authoritarian; another is concerned with getting precise work from the students; another fosters freedom.

All the teachers in each department shared a common planning time each day. Usually this was used for individual planning, except for departmental meetings each week. Thus, a joint attack on problems was possible and was a feature of the instructional program. Cooperation among teachers was further facilitated by the open spaces in several of the subject department areas.

> It provides the opportunity for places for people to work together. Teachers are almost forced to work as a team. It is difficult to close the door and do your own thing. So teachers talk.

Subject departments also functioned to socialize new teachers into the patterns of teacher behavior required by the school's philosophy.

> Within each department there is a commitment to the basic philosophy. If a teacher is too inflexible to flow with the department, the teacher cannot do what she wants to do. The method of scheduling, the weekly meetings and the constant interaction and high visibility--no one can just go off into a classroom and teach by herself for five periods--makes certain that we all follow the same line.

Similarly, an administrator said,

> Occasionally, we must take action if we think things are falling apart. But there is so much teaming and intermingling in the departments that a teacher who needs help is easily identified and fellow teachers can usually provide it.

The principal and assistant principals met with the teachers in each department regularly (usually weekly) and visited more frequently on request. Teachers had the opportunity to raise issues about courses or students. When there was occasional conflict over interpretations of policy, the principal was invited to suggest what might be an appropriate solution to the dilemma in the light of the school's philosophy. Teachers valued meetings with their departmental colleagues and with administrators because they felt the meetings helped reduce isolation.

Teacher-Advisor Groups

Each teacher was responsible for assisting up to 32 students to plan their schedules in relation to graduation requirements. They monitored their schedules daily and, also, for one hour a day, met to provide personal and social counseling as required. Neither the principal nor the assistant principals had teacher-advisor groups. Departmental chairpersons had a reduced number of advisees.

The teacher-advisor system made significant contributions to the decision-making process. First, the system helped teachers obtain a broad overall view of the schools' instructional program. It partly helped to overcome the isolation which occurred in a structure that was so strongly departmentalized. A teacher reported,

> We are very departmentalized so that it would be very easy for our teachers not to know what is going on in another department. However the teacher-advisor system means that there is a lot of intermingling among teachers. They usually don't find out how other teachers teach, but they do find out

> about managerial things, like subject graduation requirements, the importance of sequencing in some subjects, why some departments require a particular type of discipline. Things like that.

Second, teachers became concerned not only about their subject matter but also about their students and the total curriculum. It was impossible to remain aloof. One administrator ascribed certain consequences to this.

> Every day teachers come into this office and report that some teachers are doing a fine job in following the philosophy or they report that other teachers are not. Furthermore, each teacher sees the need to be fair to their students because they see themselves being discussed by other teachers. What is more, teachers see a more humane aspect of their instructional role and it changes their attitude to the principals' role, just because they know more.

Third, the teacher-advisor role helped minimize conflict among staff members. Students brought concerns to their advisors who were forced to find out what was going on in other departments.

> It forces us to communicate with each other. A lot of conflict comes from teachers, especially new teachers, not knowing about our policies. If a student complains, I go to the teacher and explain how we do it here. This minimizes conflicting interpretations of the philosophy. If I get no action, I go to the principal if the problem is a severe one.

Parents

Parents were not involved in the building decision-making process. The principals' view was that parental involvement in the process established relationships which interferred with the professional autonomy of the staff. Furthermore, parents were not willing

to become involved. There was very little positive action by parents to participate in the decision-making process unless they had complaints.

School Board and District Office

Most of the decision making at School F occurred within the parameters established by the district office. The school's instructional program was required to follow the K-12 districtwide program. This was not perceived to be a serious disadvantage, however. First, teachers at the school were always involved in the development of the courses. Second, methodology was not prescribed. Teachers were free to develop alternative approaches providing they remained within the philosophy that individual students should be afforded the opportunity of continuous progress. Third, although proposals for new courses which had been generated within the school required districtwide approval, only rarely had the school been refused. Finally, although consultants had been appointed they were not designated as supervisors or consultants to individual subject areas. They were curriculum generalists rather than specialists. Their function was to serve the needs of the districtwide curriculum committees and the needs of subject departments within the schools by providing advice and information.

The district office intervened on occasion to affect the management of the school. For example, an open-space classroom had been partitioned at the insistance of the district office because

it was felt that "more management control" was needed in the building. The district office had also insisted that the school maintain a closed campus and that student control should be "tightened up."

School personnel generally accepted these arrangements. Regarding instruction, they felt that they had adequate professional autonomy.

> The district curriculum guides make it easy to individualize programs. They are not bibles. Some teachers follow the suggested activities to the letter. Most do more.
>
> They [the district office personnel] exercise control over courses. All teachers in the district must agree. It is a large umbrella, but it is not difficult to live with. Our teachers are always involved with the committees.

However, others pointed out that compliance with the philosophy was a condition of continued employment.

> Our staff are aware of what we stand for in the district. 'Aware' means acceptance--either willing or compliant. They do so or they are forced to leave. Most begin by complying and end up willingly accepting.

Regarding school management, the staff was aware of the special attention which a community directs toward an innovating school. They understood that the district office had to "keep in mind" what the community thought.

> When you have been a traditional school and you change, people say, "Well I remember like it was when I was there, and it wasn't like that." So they question more about what we do. Our decision making is more affected by what the community is thinking about us simply because the community is thinking about us more.

An indicator of staff sensitivity to local opinion was the provision that some students were allowed to operate on a permanent schedule should their parents wish it.

Respondents felt that the district office generally supported the school. They pointed out that School F had been implementing instructional programs which emphasized continual progress of individual students before it had become district policy to do so. They also felt that the district office had confidence in the staff to carry out the policy.

> Views of the district office do not differ from ours. Many of them were here before we were. Sometimes they don't know what is going on . . . things do change. But mostly they give us support, direction, and constraint. Their systemwide perspective doesn't inhibit us much.

Centralization of Decision Making in School F

The locus of authority for decision making lay at three hierarchical levels: in the district office, with the principal, and in the subject departments with the departmental chairpersons.

All major curricular decisions were made at the district office, which mandated both the philosophy of continuous progress and the course outlines. Proposals for course changes or for new courses generated by the school had to be approved at the district office. Budgets were allocated there.

Within these parameters the principal was the ultimate authority for all building decisions. All major issues and matters were referred to him for final decision even though some areas of

responsibility were delegated to the assistant principals or to subject department chairpersons.

> It [decision making] is primarily done by the principal. He delegates some decisions but if a new policy is required or something big is coming up we discuss it with him.

Some authority had been delegated to the assistant principal, two of whom were perceived by staff to have more authority than the other two. They and the principal formed the "dominant group" which made the major decisions in the school.

Subject departments had been delegated some authority to make decisions in operational matters which affected their own subject fields. However any proposals that were contentious, i.e. those that were thought not to be in accord with the school philosophy, were referred to the principal for a decision.

The high degree of centralization of the decision-making process generally was not questioned by the staff. There was an "expectation" among them that "this is the way it has to be." Two reasons were given. First, the nature of the program required that all persons involved should pursue the same goals and follow the same procedures.

> No teacher can be an island in this school. The program is designed to help the student. We teachers cannot do our own thing because our "own thing" is not what is necessarily important to the student. The system which ensures that each kid can make continuous progress has to be followed by each of us, otherwise it breaks down.

Second, the district office had mandated the program and it was a condition of teachers employment that they comply. Thus,

those teachers whose philosophy of education was not in accord with the philosophy of the school accepted the high degree of centralization of decision making because it ensured that they retain their employment.

Routinization of Decision Making in School F

Little conflict arose over issues at School F. The school philosophy was well established and known to all staff whose acceptance was expected. There were, however, issues which arose over the interpretation of the philosophy. In these cases the decision-making process was routine.

There were as well some problems yet unsolved, such as the need to develop a realistic reward system rather than a punitive method for maintaining discipline; student tardiness and lack of motivation; the need to develop appropriate tests to replace the pencil and paper tests currently in use; and the lack of adequate identification of the different learning styles appropriate for each student. The principal explained the policy which underlay the decision-making process utilized to solve problems such as these:

> We do not re-invent the wheel. The aim is to maintain consistency throughout the school by systematizing it but without losing momentum for the change. We try to be and remain sensitive. In an insensitive system we would try to maintain what was good and bad. But here we have revised the system when the need arises, for example we devised a new program when we realized that our instructional assistants were flipflopping too frequently for their good or the school's good. We have routinized the program . . . systematized it.

> I suppose you could say we have a routinized system. But it is a sensitized one and subject to innovation in relation to need.

Another teacher reported:

> A rigid type of decision making would probably destroy this kind of school. The principal has to be open and loose. Things are never final and never absolute. So the administrators have to be flexible.

Satisfaction with Decision Making in School F

Most of the staff accepted the educational philosophy of the school and the remainder complied with it. Among the latter group there were some dissidents who sought change, but most expressed the view that the omnipresence of the philosophy created a stable working environment--"at least you know where you are and what is expected of you."

There was a high level of satisfaction with the decision-making process which had been implemented in terms of the school's philosophy. The staff was generally satisfied with the district-wide decision-making process regarding curriculum. Within the school, they were satisfied with the high degree of centralization in the decision-making authority possessed by the principal. They also were highly satisfied with the degree of participation which they had in the process. A teacher reported:

> Of course there are some teachers who want to participate a whole lot more than others. Then too, there are those who want the principal to make a whole lot more straight decisions himself--to exhibit more control. But the big majority of us are encouraged by the amount of participation we get in this school.

Another teacher said:

The best thing I like about it [the decision-making] is the openness of it. There is someone above us telling us what to do. But our ideas are considered and weighed. If they are rejected every effort is made to explain why. Directives only come from above after there has been discussion.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter consists of an analysis of the data from the six selected schools. Common characteristics are examined across all schools. First, an overview of the change stage reached by the schools is provided, together with an overview of the philosophies of individualized schooling and their relationship to decision making. Then the administrative structures and groups are described, together with the decision-making procedures which sustained them. Finally, the variables of centralization and routinization of decision making, and satisfaction with decision making are synthesized.

Stage of Program Change

The six schools were in different stages of the change process. One school was in the reimplementation stage--staff and the new principal had evaluated the program and structures which had been implemented during the prior change process. The school was expected by the district office to move into another cycle of evaluation, initiation, and implementation once the current reimplementation stage had been completed.

Another school, a new school, was in the implementation stage of the innovation process and was approaching the routinization stage. Both the school and district, however, were committed to a policy of cyclical re-evaluation, initiation, and implementation.

Four schools were in the routinization stage of the innovation process. Although each had fully integrated its innovative program of individualized schooling into the ongoing activities of the organization, there was variation among them regarding the recycling of the stages of the innovation process. One school was not undergoing any formal or concentrated reevaluation of the program which had been originally adopted. It was and had been, however, subject to reevaluation by the community so that some highly innovative elements of its program had been eliminated or modified. The other three schools were undergoing reevaluation (and subsequent stages of the new innovation process) both from within the school and without and in varying degrees. The staff in two of these schools was sensitive to the need for change and undertook refinement cautiously. In the third, major revisions of the instructional program were made whenever and wherever the need was felt.

School Philosophy

Each school had developed a philosophy which articulated the the goals of the school and the values and principles which underlay the instructional program and the administrative structures designed to attain those goals. The statements were seen by principals and others as providing an essential basis for policy and managerial decision making. All statements emphasized the unique differences and interests of individual students and the responsibility of the school to provide an individualized instructional

program to accommodate those differences. The instructional programs derived from those philosophy statements, however, emphasized different programmatic elements.

One school emphasized course diversity through expansion of traditional course offerings and through creation of specialized programs. Another emphasized the importance of providing alternative learning environments best suited to each student's preferred learning style. Two emphasized self-paced learning and continuous progress within traditional course offerings. Two emphasized optional objectives, learning modes and levels of difficulty within traditional course offerings. In addition, all schools emphasized specialized programs for students failing to reach minimal competencies in the basic skills and all emphasized the importance of close personal teacher-student relationships.

The school philosophy statements had been created in different ways, although the principal was always a key instigator. In one established school, the statement had been created by a task force of teachers which had obtained staff opinion and developed a final statement over several weeks. In four, the new schools, the philosophies were worked out over some months, often including summer workshops, with much staff participation and use of consultants. In the other, staff involvement was in response to a district-wide movement to implement a philosophy of individualized schooling.

Acceptance and compliance with the school philosophy as a basis for making decisions about the school program varied among staff within the schools. In one school, the philosophy was not fully accepted and was a source of active disagreement, not only because of the implications for its implementation, but also because some staff felt that it had not been developed in a manner which would have ensured consensus. Compliance by some staff members was at best reluctant, and, at worst, openly hostile. In the other schools, the philosophy generally was accepted by the staff either because it coincided with their own educational goals or because they were willing to comply with the principal's or district office's directive that they should.

Among some staff members, those who had been involved in its development, there was a strong feeling of ownership of the philosophy because they had participated in its creation. They were more willing to make and accept decisions based on the philosophy than were teachers who had been hired since.

Implementation of the philosophy in terms of the instructional program varied within some schools, but not within others. In two, it was rigorously supervised and maintained by the administrative staff, and in one school, by a curriculum review committee. In the others, different interpretations were permitted in response to some subject specialists who felt that they were unable to implement the philosophy in their subject fields. The goal of schoolwide individualization had not been achieved in these schools.

Administrative Structures and Groups

Decision making across the six schools will first be treated in terms of the decision-making policies. Then, administrative structures and groups usually found in traditional secondary schools will be treated: administrative staff; cabinets; faculty meetings and associated committees; and parent and student groups. Innovative administrative structures such as instructional improvement committees, administrative units, learning communities and advisor groups will be treated next. Then, structures such as subject fields and departments will be described. Finally, the impact of districtwide bodies on the decision-making process of the schools will be treated. This analysis does not identify specific schools by the labels used in the previous chapter.

Decision-Making Policies

The decision-making structures and processes of each school were informed and given direction by a policy of decision making which was developed and implemented by the principal.

Across the six schools, all principals emphasized, first, the importance of a school philosophy as a basis for decision making although, as described earlier, the schools differed in the degree to which divergent interpretation of the school philosophy was permitted.

Second, all principals valued participation of all faculty in the decision-making process--particularly, those personnel required to implement the decisions.

Third, regarding the importance of seeking consensus on issues, principals felt it led to greater satisfaction by staff because they had a chance to shape the decisions, and to a greater commitment by staff to implement the decisions.

Fourth, the importance of the administrative staff being readily accessible and willing to listen to faculty concerns and to reach speedy decisions regarding their problems was recognized.

Fifth, it was important that administrators remain sufficiently flexible to review a decision should it be strongly opposed--while maintaining their responsibility to set the parameters within which the decision making could occur.

As well as the difference of emphasis alluded to above, there were other differences in the decision-making policies. First, two principals strongly valued the participation of students and parents. The other four did not.

Second, four principals valued the establishment of additional decision-making structures to facilitate cross-departmental and small group settings for the involvement of personnel in the decision-making process. The other two did not because they felt such structures were dysfunctional in that they intruded on the continuous, informal and close relationship between the principal and the teachers which they valued highly.

Third, willingness to delegate decisional autonomy varied among the principals. All principals retained the right to be the ultimate authority. However, one had delegated considerable

authority to the directors of the schools-within-the-school--in effect they acted as principals of their schools. Three had established buildingwide policy-making bodies which were at varying stages of development, and hence authority. Two delegated no authority except to assistant principals.

Administrative Staff

The administrative staff in each school consisted of the principal, several assistant principals, and in some schools, administrative assistants.

In each of the schools the principals placed much emphasis on their role as educational leader of the school, although they fulfilled that role in different ways. In the two schools that were in the early implementation stages, the principals were primarily concerned with establishing decision-making structures and processes which would impact on policy making about the instructional program. In three others, the principals were primarily concerned with monitoring course development, instructional activities, etc. and ensuring that these complied with the school philosophy. In the sixth school, the directors of the schools-within-the school together with their staff, were responsible for determining their own instructional programs. Across the six schools, two principals were highly creative in the role of course development. The others, less so. Nevertheless, the level of all principals' instructional leadership activity was perceived to be much higher than in traditional secondary schools.

Assignment of duties to assistant principals varied among the schools, but in all cases their decision making was expected to be in accordance with the school philosophy so that consistency of administrative policy was maintained. Of the five schools that maintained a holistic approach to the instructional program, four emphasized the concept of the administrative team approach to decision making, duties overlapped, and frequent, informal shared decision making occurred. In the other school this feature was not present. In each of these schools, the assistant principals were delegated specific managerial buildingwide responsibilities, e.g., facilities, discipline. In two, however, the assistant principals were assigned additional general administrative responsibilities for a small subdivision of teachers and students, the units and learning communities.

Responsibility for supervision of the instructional program was shared by the principal with all of his assistants in two schools; with one assistant in two schools; and in the other, not at all.

Notwithstanding the differences described above, there existed in all schools a commitment of all administrative personnel to make themselves available, to listen to concerns, to effect immediate solutions to problems, and to ensure consistent decision making. These characteristics prevailed throughout the selected schools.

Cabinets

Meetings of the administrative staff with subject department chairpersons or the directors of the schools-within-the-school, and

other significant personnel occurred regularly, and informal consultation occurred frequently in five schools. In the sixth school, where department chairpersons had only recently been appointed, such meetings were not held at all. In the cabinets, the principal communicated information and directives to the members (and through them to the entire staff) and raised problems and issues of concern. Members, in turn, were able to represent faculty concerns and opinions to the administrators. From these meetings, major issues and problems were often referred to ad hoc committees for exploration and recommendation. As such, cabinet meetings were generally considered to be highly significant in the decision-making process of the schools and members generally had power to affect decisions.

Variations occurred among the schools. In one school, the cabinet meeting was the major arena for raising and discussing issues and problems in the school and for recommending solutions. All members of the staff valued the degree of participation in the decision-making process which the structure afforded. In another school where subject department chairmen continued to meet with the administrators and formed a powerful decision-making group, additional groups (the learning community leaders' meeting and the program improvement committee) also were involved in deciding operational matters and were beginning to discuss the instructional program.

In the two other schools, members felt that their participation was limited to raising issues and suggesting solutions because the principals preferred to make most of the major decisions.

Faculty Meetings

In two schools, full faculty meetings were held regularly. In the other four, they were held irregularly and with less frequency. In all schools, primary attention was given to information, directives, and issues raised by the principal. Matters of concern to staff members, while not excluded, received less attention. The full faculty meeting generally was ineffective as a decision-making structure because the time available was too short, and because too many people were involved to allow for adequate exchange of information and opinions or for agreements to be reached. These factors accounted for their diminishing frequency and for attempts in all schools to ensure that faculty involvement in the decision-making process occurred in small group settings.

Four schools had created structures additional to those usually found in traditional secondary schools. Three had grouped the full faculty into smaller units, communities, or schools-within-the school. In the fourth, meetings were held regularly between administrators and teachers in each subject department. These and the other two smaller schools also utilized close, frequent and informal contact and consultation between and among administrators and teachers to facilitate the decision-making process. Staffs valued the intimacy of small group settings and opportunities afforded to raise and discuss buildingwide issues fully in an interdepartmental exchange of information and opinions.

Task Forces

Five schools regularly utilized ad hoc committees or task forces to gather information, ascertain staff opinions, and make recommendations on specific issues. Members usually consisted of six to eight volunteers, were concerned with only one issue, and served only until recommendations had been made. Only interested teachers became involved. Full faculty opinion could be polled effectively and efficiently and membership was not prolonged. While not all task force recommendations had unanimous staff approval, all who so chose did have an opportunity to influence decisions.

Students

Student participation in the decision-making process varied in terms of both the level of participation and the content of the decision areas in which they participated.

Student councils concerned only with student activities existed in five schools, but in one not at all. Only in one did the student council discuss and make recommendations to the administration on program issues.

Formal student representation and participation in building-wide program improvement committees and task forces occurred in two schools. Informal student participation was actively encouraged in a third. In a fourth school, the principal (against apathy of the staff) was urging greater student participation. In the other two, student participation was at a low level, but no action was being taken to redress these situations.

In the schools where it existed, student participation was highly valued by most respondents because the presence of students provided a client-centered perspective and caused school personnel to be more pragmatic in their decision making. In these and the other schools, however, student participation was limited because their knowledge of issues was restricted.

Parents

The level of parent participation varied among the schools. Parent organizations which were concerned with money raising and similar support services existed in all schools. In two of these organizations, parents were also involved in decision making through discussion about school policy and the instructional program. In a third, interest and involvement had been high, but had lapsed--with the concurrence of the principal who felt it was unnecessary. In a fourth school, the principal also felt it was unnecessary. In the other two, there was dissatisfaction that parents were not more involved, but nothing was being done to redress the situation.

In all schools, parent interest in participation in formal organizations was low, and attendance was a very small fraction of the total number of parents. When parents wished to become directly involved, they did so occasionally, informally through contact with the principal or districtwide officials, and, usually, to express dissatisfaction with an element of the schools' program. Even so, a distinctive feature of all the schools was the frequency of parent contact initiated by teachers.

Stimulated by the teacher-advisor programs, the staff regularly reported to parents and often consulted with them regarding the student's program or problems. Staff perceived this to be a major element in the individualization of each student's instructional program.

In two schools, parents were formally involved in program improvement committees and associated subcommittees and task forces. In one, parent participation was a very recent phenomenon and hence very limited at the time of the study. In the second, parent participation had been actively encouraged since the school began. In this school parent participation was highly valued by most respondents because the presence of parents added parental and community perspectives to issues, caused the professional educators to be more client-centered in their thinking, and assisted in legitimizing the decisions in the eyes of the community.

Program Improvement Committees

Two schools had established program improvement committees with membership representative of parents, students, teachers and administrators. None of the other four schools intended to do so. In the two schools the intention was that the committee should become the major policy-making group. At the time of the study, however, neither was functioning as intended. In one committee, agenda items included day-to-day operational matters, such as the calendar. The other committee was concerned with policy and managerial matters, such as a student smoking area.

In the first school, the committee was seen as an unnecessary addition to the decision-making structure, or at best a body whose function should be limited to operational matters. In the second school, the committee had made some progress toward its intended goals, although some regretted that parents and students were involved in decision areas which traditionally had been the province of professional educators.

In both schools, the authority of the program improvement committee was limited. The principals made final decisions on most of the major issues although they were sometimes willing to cede their authority in minor matters.

Decision Making in Small Group Settings

Three schools, those with large enrollments, had subdivided the student body and faculty into small units for administration, or student counseling or instruction. Each of the organizational structures was intended to reduce the size of the decision-making group to a scale which was personal and manageable.

In one school, four administrative units had been created consisting of clusters of the teacher-advisor groups, a unit principal, and a counselor. The unit principal was responsible for day-to-day operational concerns of the teachers and students in the unit, and the counselor was responsible for the students in the unit. Staff and students met regularly to discuss unit concerns and buildingwide issues and problems. Under these arrangements, students,

teachers, counselors and administrators came to know and understand each other, were able to communicate easily and receive or give immediate attention to problems. The small group setting ensured that all staff members could participate and, through the unit representatives, these matters were known to buildingwide councils and to the administrators.

Another school had created six learning communities consisting of teachers, the students who chose them as advisor and an administrator. Teachers and the administrative facilitator met regularly to consider the operation of the teacher advisory system, day-to-day operational arrangements, and elements of the instructional program. Learning community leaders met regularly with the principal and were members of the program improvement committee. Some felt that the additional decision-making structures were unnecessary and intruded into the domains of the subject departments. Others valued the interdepartmental exchange of views which was occurring in a small group setting and which allowed for adequate discussion.

The third school had grouped students and teachers into several sub-schools which provided optional learning environments. The instructional program, student counseling, and administration of each school was the responsibility of the director and teachers. The staff of this school valued the decision-making process in each sub-school because students, teachers, and directors shared similar educational goals, were in close daily contact, and directors

had been delegated much autonomy to make policy and management decisions within the school.

Teacher-Advisor Programs

Teacher-advisor programs were significant in the decision-making processes in the five schools where they existed, although their effectiveness varied within the school--according to the skills and disposition of individual teachers to undertake the role of teacher-advisor--and among schools, according to the nature of the program.

In five schools, teacher-advisors and their students met daily for daily announcements. In four of these, the program also entailed monitoring student progress, reviewing the schedule, sharing student concerns, assisting with personal problems, and contacting parents if necessary. In the fifth school, these tasks were conducted only occasionally. The sixth school relied on the close proximity of students, teachers, and the counselor in each sub-school to perform these functions.

The programs facilitated an informal information flow between each student and the teacher-advisor, between the teacher-advisor and other teachers of the student, and among all teachers, subject departments, and administrators regarding student needs, instructional programs, etc. The advisor programs were valued by most respondents because students' needs and concerns were made known and because teachers came to understand the total, buildingwide program.

Decision making was enhanced because discussion was informed by student concerns and opinions and by staff perspectives which were more student centered than they would otherwise have been. However, in no school had the curriculum offerings been altered as a result of the information and opinions generated by the teacher-advisor program.

Subject Departments

The selected schools differed with regard to the structures and processes they had established for making decisions about courses, instruction and related organizational matters in the subject fields. Three schools had retained the subject department structure, chairpersons and responsibilities usually found in traditional high schools. The other schools had created alternative structures.

Within the schools which had retained the traditional subject departments, there were variations regarding their responsibilities and degrees of autonomy. One school had retained the traditional structures and had created additional groups, e.g., learning communities, which were beginning to discuss instructional issues in interdisciplinary groups, but major decisions regarding curriculum were made by the subject department teachers and chairpersons. In the second school, the district office prescribed courses and the building administrators rigorously supervised the learning activities to ensure compliance with the school's philosophy of individualized instruction. In the third school, each department interpreted the school philosophy as was felt best for students.

In the other three schools, subject departments had not been institutionalized so strongly as they had been in the first three. The principals' reasons were: first, they wanted instructional decisions to be generated from the school philosophy, not from the discipline requirements of the subjects. Second, departmental structures were seen as barriers to change in that they created groups of teachers who became isolated and subject centered in their thinking. Third, individual teacher initiative and creativity would flourish best outside of the traditional structures. Fourth, different educational philosophies among teachers within a subject department often created conflict which was dysfunctional.

Within these schools, there was variance regarding their responsibilities and degree of autonomy of decision making. One school had grouped teachers of similar subject fields into areas and area coordinators had been appointed to assist with logistical and organizational functions. Increasingly, they advised teachers on course development although the main agents for this were the administrators and a buildingwide curriculum review committee who approved proposed learning activities. In the second school no subject department had been institutionalized at the time of the study, although some subject coordinators had just been appointed as a result of staff pressure to organize logistical matters within each subject field. Within the third school, course decisions were made by individual teachers with the approval of each director in accordance with the sub-schools' educational philosophy.

In all six schools, interdisciplinary team planning or teaching rarely existed. Each teacher was generally autonomous within the classroom if the parameters established by the school philosophy were not exceeded. Some small-scale programs involving cooperation among groups of teachers existed in three schools. Remediation programs in the basic skills were taught within the appropriate subject departments and by individual teachers.

Districtwide Bodies

Involvement of the school board, the district office, and the local community in the decision-making processes of the schools varied in terms of nature, level, and effects.

One school had little decisional autonomy. Its philosophy of individualized schooling and the courses were prescribed by the district office as part of the districtwide K-12 program. There was, however, little conflict because school staff was in agreement with the philosophy, were always involved in districtwide decisions regarding the curriculum, and they decided their own methodologies. Another school had been delegated autonomy in all program and budgetary decisions and was not under community pressure to change its program. It received strong encouragement from the school board and district office to develop as diverse an instructional program as the staff felt was consistent with the needs of the students.

The four other schools had been similarly autonomous, but at the time of the study they increasingly were becoming constrained

in their decision making by pressures from the district office. There were three reasons for this. First, financial exigencies required that the school's programs be monitored so that increased costs should not occur or that expenditures should be cut. Second, local community disenchantment with the innovative program forced administrators to limit innovativeness. Third, curricular initiatives from outside the school--e.g., specified graduation requirements, course guidelines and monitoring systems--inhibited innovation.

Among these four schools the effect of the intervention ranged from severe to minor. For example, in one school an entire subschool had been closed; in another, inflexible scheduling for entering students was imposed; in another, discipline policies were "tightened"; in another, textbook selection had to be approved. Districtwide bodies had not intruded into instructional decisions made by teachers in their classrooms. Most instructional programs of these schools remained intact. Generally, the staffs were able to "work around" directives to continue their programs without serious compromise.

Centralization of the Decision-Making Process

The extent of centralization of the decision process was determined by reference to the number of individuals, groups, and structures who had authority to make final decisions regarding the instructional program and day-to-day operational management of the school, as well as the frequency and level of participation of the members of the structures and groups.

The final authority on decisions in each school often rested in the district office. In one school, authority for major buildingwide decisions had always been in the district office. In two other schools the trend was increasing for the district office to become the locus of authority for decisions. In two others, the trend was incipient and was not perceived to have a serious impact on the program. In the sixth school, the authority rested entirely within the school.

Within the school buildings, the locus of authority rested with the principals. Notwithstanding their policies which emphasized the participative approach and the importance of seeking consensus, the principals set the parameters within which the decision making could occur, nearly always made the major decisions, and decided how much authority would be delegated to others.

The schools differed regarding the extent of the authority which had been delegated to administrative staffs, subject departments and to structures and groups other than traditional department chairpersons' meetings.

In two schools centralization of the decision-making structures and groups was high. In one school, the principal delegated very little decision-making authority to the administrative staff, permitted much decisional autonomy about the instructional program to subject departments, and established no other formal structures for staff participation, but frequently involved staff informally. In the second school, the principal had delegated little authority

to his administrative staff, permitted little decisional autonomy to the subject departments, and had established no other additional structures for formal staff participation. He likewise, frequently involved the staff informally in decision-making.

Centralization of the decision-making process in the other schools was low. In one school, the principal delegated considerable authority to the administrative staff and the subject departments and created additional structures to facilitate formal staff participation in the decision-making process. In a second school, the principal delegated considerable authority to the directors and staffs of the sub-schools and delegated decisional autonomy to teachers rather than departments. In the third and fourth schools, the principals had delegated considerable authority to the administrative staffs, and had not established subject departments but emphasized the importance of decisional autonomy for teachers and had created additional structures to facilitate the formal participation of staff members in the decision-making process. Informal participation also occurred frequently.

In all six schools some staff members participated more frequently and with more power than did others. The principals appeared to have great confidence in them and consulted with them often.

Staff members in all of the selected schools perceived the extent of their participation in the decision-making process to be high--much higher than in traditional schools.

Routinization of the Decision-Making Process

Routinization of the decision-making process existed in four schools--those where the innovative process had occurred for several years. It also was occurring in the fifth school which was in the third year of its operation. In the sixth school, a change in the principalship had resulted in a decision-making process which consisted of both heuristic and routine decision-making elements.

In the first four schools, the decision-making process had changed from the time the innovation was initiated to the time of the study when the innovation was routinized. Staff members having long tenure in the schools cited several items of evidence. First, fewer decisions, whether creative or procedural, were being made.

Second, while staff participation was perceived to be still much higher in the selected schools than in traditional schools, staff members were participating less in the decision making process; fewer meetings, whether regular, ad hoc, formal or informal were held; staff were talking less to each other; and summer workshops had almost disappeared.

Third, the process had become somewhat authoritarian. Decision making was perceived to be increasingly centralized in administrators--whether the principal or the district office. There was a tendency, moreover, to seek staff opinion after a decision had been made rather than before.

Fourth, staff generally were less creative and less likely to use initiative to solve problems. There was low intensity about "burning issues." Staff generally felt less committed to continuing the innovative process.

Four factors contributed to change in the schools. First, once the school philosophy had been agreed on and implementation policies and procedures decided, only questions of refinement and dysfunction within the school remained to be decided. Issues most commonly mentioned during the study in these schools related to such matters as student discipline, attendance and tardiness. Generally, there was a lack of conflict about instructional issues.

Second, the composition of the staffs had changed. Several staff members who had been influential in the early stages of the innovative process had left the school. Among those who remained, many complained of "burn out," feeling that they were spent of creativity and tired of making decisions. Staff members new to the school were not so committed to its philosophy and were concerned with establishing themselves as teachers.

Third, pressures from parents, the community, and the district office had created a climate which inhibited heuristic decision making.

Fourth, decreasing availability of money had reduced the frequency of paid summer workshops and other training activities.

In the fifth school, where the process of routinization was actually occurring at the time of the study, the same phenomena

described above also existed. Although the principal and other influentials were still maintaining a creative stance, and although the decision-making structures were designed to facilitate heuristic decision making, the staffs generally were beginning to protest the amount of their involvement in decision making and to request that decisions, especially procedural ones be made by administrators.

In the sixth school, the recent changes in the decision-making process had resulted in participation of staff, shared decision making among groups and structures and few creative decisions by the principal. The motivation for the changes, however, was that a more heuristic mode of decision making would develop among staff members.

Satisfaction With the Decision-Making Process

Generally, a high degree of satisfaction with the decision-making process existed among the staff in all six schools--differences in the process notwithstanding. Staffs were satisfied that a specified school philosophy existed as a basis for decision making. Even in schools where there was dissension about the means of implementing the philosophy or where divergence was permitted in its implementation, a necessary platform existed from which instructional and managerial issues could be identified and consistent decisions made.

Staff members generally were highly satisfied with the level of their personal participation in the decision-making process. It was seen as higher in the selected schools than in traditional schools.

Staffs were gratified that their input was valued as an essential element in decision-making and that their participation was sought either through an informal process, which existed in all schools, or formally through the decision-making structures and groups, which in some schools had been augmented to increase participation. Especially satisfying was the behavior of the principal in actively seeking staff opinions concerning issues. The search for consensus, which, while not always expected to be achieved, was valued as an opportunity to shape ultimate decisions. Also valued was the ease with which staff might approach administrators with ideas and problems, as well as the administrators' willingness to listen. Finally, the flexibility of principals was valued.

Regarding the decision-making process in administrative structures and groups, especially satisfying was the openness of the process.

Second, the content of the issues discussed was less restricted to instructional issues within subject boundaries, but more concerned with student centered issues relating to the total educational needs and learning environment of the individual student.

Third, the provision of small group settings through task forces, units, etc., provided an opportunity for all to participate fully in discussions rather than be limited in their participation, as in large faculty meetings.

Fourth, the provision of decision-making structures other than subject departments--such as learning communities and teacher advisor

programs--encouraged interdepartmental exchanges and hence broadened staff members' perspectives.

Some dissatisfaction existed among staff members of the six selected schools. Apart from dissatisfactions specific to one school a major cause of dissatisfaction was that the decision-making process was very slow.

CHAPTER V

OVERVIEW, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter consists of three sections. The first section provides a brief overview of the study. The next gives a summary of the major conclusions and related implications for practice. The final section presents some implications for further research.

Overview of the Study

This study consisted of an intensive in-depth analysis of the decision-making structures in six senior high schools which were implementing programs of individualized schooling. Field methodology was used to investigate and describe underlying philosophies of decision making; the structures, processes, groups and organizational dimensions which were of significance; the involvement of personnel in the decision-making process; and the satisfaction of school personnel with structures, processes and involvement in decision making.

The conceptual and theoretical foundations of this study included literature dealing with Individually Guided Education (IGE), change theory, decision theory, and organization theory. IGE literature relating to both elementary and secondary levels provided a conceptual framework for an analysis of the philosophy which

underlay shared decision making in schools that implement individualized programs. Change theory afforded a means of determining and describing the particular change phase which each of the schools had reached at the time of the study. The change stage was seen as an important intervening variable which affected the routinization of the decision-making process. The following four-factor framework of change stages in innovative organizations developed by Hage and Aiken (1970) was used: evaluation, initiation, implementation, and routinization.

Decision theory provided a framework for describing typologies of the decision-making process. Constructs identified by Lipham and Hoeh (1974) were used to describe decision-making processes as they related to heuristic or routinized decisions. The typology of Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) provided constructs utilized to describe decision making in group situations in terms of authority and collective decisions. These constructs were used because decision making in the schools occurred within parameters established by the principal and, in turn, the district office and the school board since they had ultimate responsibility for the decisions made. Two sub-categories of authority decisions were further utilized: the authoritative approach where decisions were made without member participation; and the participative approach where members did participate.

Organization theory provided concepts utilized to describe the structural dimensions of the decision-making process. Elements

chosen included centralization, a construct defined by Haig and Aiken (1970) as the degree to which decision-making power rested with a smaller or larger number of individuals and groups, and as the frequency and level of participation in the decision-making process defined by Lipham (1976).

The second element was satisfaction, an outcome of the decision-making process, and linked to the degree of centralization by March and Simon (1958), Bridges (1967) and others. The construct was operationally defined as the extent to which respondents perceived their participation in decision making as being effective.

The study was conducted in six selected senior high schools in various locations of the country, diverse in socioeconomic levels, and varying in ethnic composition. Data collection procedures included interviews, observations, and content analyses of documents. Companion studies by Daresh (1978) and Neiner (1978) were conducted simultaneously to describe the facilitative environments and the change strategies used in the six schools. Subsequently, the data were coded and analyzed across all variables for each school, and then across all schools for each variable.

Conclusions and Implications For Practice

This section presents the major conclusions that emerged from an analysis of the data, followed by a discussion of each conclusion. Implications for practice are then given, based on each conclusion.

Conclusion A

An articulated school philosophy of individualized schooling is essential as a basis for policy and managerial decision-making.

Discussion. While the school philosophy was not always agreed to by all staff members, was not always implemented in its totality, and did not necessarily ensure buildingwide uniformity in the instructional program, it was valued by administrators and staff alike as a touchstone for decision making.

Problems existed regarding staff commitment to the philosophy of individualized schooling. The first related to dissension about the principles it embodied. Attempts to minimize this varied. Some principals took care to ensure that all involved participated in creating the philosophy and that there was a genuine search for consensus--the aim being ownership and commitment. Others imposed the philosophy. All schools attempted to select staff who were willing to comply.

The second problem related to the diminishing sense of "ownership" among the staff as the period since the initiation of change based on the philosophy increased and as the number of staff members who had created it decreased. New teachers were less inclined to value the school philosophy as a basis for decision-making.

The responsibility for maintaining the school philosophy as the focal point for decision making usually rested with the principal, and sometimes with other influentials in the school or officials at

the district office. The continuation of the philosophy depended very much on their tenure. Only one school had established systematic procedures within the school which appeared to ensure that the philosophy might be sustained regardless of leadership changes.

Implications.

1. The school philosophy should be developed with considerable staff participation in order to reach consensus on the philosophy.
2. The philosophy should be well publicized inside and outside the school and used overtly as a basis for decision making.
3. The philosophy should be reviewed regularly by all staff to ascertain performance gaps, to redefine goals and change practices.
4. New staff should receive particular orientation to the philosophy so that they can internalize its intent.

Conclusion B

An articulated policy for making decisions is essential for successful implementation of an innovative instructional program.

Discussion. In each of the schools, most staff members were cognizant of the decision-making policy and how it actually was implemented in their school. They valued the consistency which it generally gave to the decision-making process. Since all the decision-making policies embodied the participative approach, it

was considered important for staff members to know who decided what, when, and how.

A problem existed, however, in schools that emphasized the group process, a search for consensus, and the involvement of personnel in decision-making domains other than traditional ones. Some staff members did not understand the shared decision-making process; some had not been trained nor had experience with it; others disagreed with it. This was often dysfunctional in implementing instructional programs which depended so much on the cooperation of staff.

Implications.

1. A decision-making policy should be developed in accord with the school philosophy and should be designed to facilitate its implementation.
2. The decision-making policy should be publicized, internalized, and consistently applied.
3. It should be reviewed regularly by all staff to ascertain performance gaps and if necessary, redefined.
4. New staff should receive special orientation regarding the decision-making policy of the school.
5. Teacher training institutions should prepare prospective teachers for expanded roles in shared decision making.

Conclusion C

The principal plays the major role in determining the decision-making policy and in implementing the decision-making structures and processes.

Discussion. Notwithstanding the high level of staff participation during the initiation stages of the innovative process (which frequently included development of the decision-making policy), the principal's approach to decision making remained crucial to its development and maintenance. This was so regardless of the characteristics of a particular school's decision-making policy.

Implications.

1. Principals should be well versed in the theory and practice of decision making--particularly as it applies to innovative organizations, such as schools implementing programs of individualized schooling.
2. Principals need to develop skills which will facilitate the development, acceptance and implementation of decision-making policies appropriate to their schools.

Conclusion D

The decision-making process in schools consists primarily of authority decision making utilizing the participative approach.

Discussion. This classification is in accord with Rogers and Shoemaker's (1971) categorization of decision types, authority decisions made with member participation. Principals could not, did not, and generally, were not expected to, abdicate their responsibilities for being the ultimate authority for decisions made within the building. While the term "shared decision making" was frequently used by the administrators and staff members to describe the process of

decision making in the schools, the decision making was not collective as defined by Rogers and Shoemaker (1971), since the principal always retained the right to veto.

Implications.

1. Although shared decision making has widespread acceptance, it is more meaningful to refer to this kind of decision making as "participative" rather than "shared," since the latter term connotes a delegation of authority which does not occur.
2. Principals need to make clear their definition of participative decision making, so that expectations of decisional autonomy are not aroused among some staff members or others invited to participate in the process.

Conclusion E

The participative approach to decision making is characteristic of the schools implementing programs of individualized schooling. Several related conclusions also are significant.

1. The level of staff participation is high and perceived by staff to be much higher than in traditional schools.
2. The high level of staff participation is a significant factor in the successful implementation of the innovative instructional programs.
3. The high level of staff participation is felt by staff to be the most satisfying feature of the decision-making process.

4. Formal participation by students and parents is negligible and, generally, is not sought nor highly valued.
5. Participation by staff members in the decision-making process varies in the nature and degree of involvement according to: a) the particular school, b) the change phase of the innovation, c) the issue under discussion, and d) the willingness of individual staff members to participate.

Discussion. The decision-making policy of each principal strongly emphasized the participation of staff whether formally through traditional or new structures, or informally through continual interaction between and among administrators and staff members. Important, both to the principal and the staff, was the fact that all of the staff had the opportunity to participate. Even in schools where staff participation was generally sought after an issue had been raised by the principal and a decision proposed by him, the staff still expressed satisfaction in that they felt able to influence the final decision.

Implications.

1. Decision-making policies should ensure that there is full opportunity for staff participation in the decision-making process whether through formal structures or informal processes.
2. The value of student and parent participation should be re-examined, since in those schools where they did participate their contributions were valued.

Conclusion F

Decision-making structures facilitate the decision-making process through the creation of small group settings.

Discussion. In large schools there was concern that the traditional decision-making structures had become impersonal and inadequate for ensuring close teacher-student, teacher-teacher, and teacher-administrator relationships. In such schools, the decision-making process was diminished in quality because it took place in groups too large to ensure adequate faculty participation or too far removed from the classroom. Learning communities, task forces, schools-within-the-school, advisor systems, etc., were designed to overcome the problem of size. Generally they did. A difficulty, however, was that such groups made it necessary to create buildingwide groups, such as an instructional improvement committee, or to utilize informal processes for sharing opinions and alternatives.

Implications.

1. Schools should create structures small enough in membership to facilitate full exchange of opinion, information and problem raising between and among teachers and administrators.
2. Buildingwide policy-making bodies should be established to coordinate the decision making of the several structures and subgroups.

Conclusion G

Decision-making processes generally reflect a desire to emphasize the group process mode and search-for-consensus mode of decision making.

Discussion. Clearly, there were limitations to the search for consensus when differences among staff members were irreconcilable or time was too short for an issue to be resolved to everyone's satisfaction. Then, the principal was forced to make the decision. Also, some staff members and administrators felt the process was unnecessarily prolonged. Their frustration focused not so much on decision making relating to major policy issues (although some would have preferred even these to be "handed down") as it did on decision-making about procedural matters. They resented the loss of instructional time while they discussed "administrative" issues. Administrators, therefore, had to choose which decisions should be made unilaterally and which should be submitted to the faculty. If they felt a major policy issue was involved, then they rarely made a unilateral decision. If they felt that a day-to-day operational decision flowed automatically from a previous policy decision, then they usually made it.

Implications.

Principals should be selective about which kinds of decisions they bring forward for full participation by staff members so that staff involvement is not perceived to be an unnecessary chore.

Conclusion H

A number of conclusions emerged regarding staff perceptions of the effectiveness of the several decision-making structures and groups. Implicit in them are desirable administrative and decision-making arrangements.

1. Administrative staffs are most effective when (1) they operate as a team sharing the same philosophy, so that there is consistency in the decision making; (2) they have specified, delegated responsibilities shared among them, so that staff has easy access to the decision maker; and (3) they make themselves readily available to staff, so that staff opinion and problems can be made known and handled.
2. The principal is a key figure in decision making relating to the instructional program and is primarily responsible for maintaining its direction.
3. Buildingwide policy-making committees function effectively when staff members feel they can have their concerns raised at meetings, and prior decisions which had proved inappropriate can be reviewed, and if necessary, changed.
4. Buildingwide instructional improvement committees or councils have not yet functioned as intended.
5. Full faculty meetings are not useful for decision making about major issues, except as an arena for raising them.

6. Ad hoc committees or task forces are valuable administrative structures because they allow for full staff participation.
7. Organization of the total faculty and students into small groups fulfills different functions. They are effective because (1) they facilitate the close interpersonal relationships between students, teachers and administrators; (2) they facilitate interdepartmental exchange of information and opinion; (3) they accelerate the decision-making process; and (4) they ensure that the decisions are made by the people knowledgeable about the situation.
8. Teacher-advisor programs facilitate the decision-making process because they stimulate the exchange of information and opinion among teachers, so that their understanding of their students and of other subject fields is enhanced. Consequently, they are able to participate more effectively in the buildingwide decision-making process.
9. While there is no agreement about the value of subject departments (some perceive them to be essential in the decision-making process whereas others perceive them to be barriers to change), some administrative arrangements must be provided to logistical organization, coordination, and articulation in each of the subject fields.
10. Generally, the school board and district office have impact on the decision-making process of the school, however they also can inhibit the innovation process.

Conclusion I

Although the extent of centralization of the decision-making process varies from high to low, staff satisfaction remains high in all the selected schools.

Discussion. While the locus of final authority in all matters rested with the building principal, schools had delegated more or less decisional autonomy to groups and structures within the school, so that centralization baried from low to high. The literature (Coch and French, 1948; and others) suggested that high centralization was related to low teacher satisfaction. In the selected schools, however, the high level of participation of staff members appeared to be the key variable. Whether through the additional structures created to facilitate staff participation or through omnipresent opportunity for individuals to participate informally as they wished, staff could fulfill their professional expectation that they should have a voice in the matters that affected them. Hence, high centralization was not necessarily a cause of dissatisfaction.

Implications.

In circumstances where high centralization is required or preferred it is incumbent on the decision makers to ensure that staff members have the opportunity to participate in decision making.

Conclusion J

The nature of the decision-making process changes and becomes routinized as innovation proceeds through the several stages of the change process.

Discussion. This conclusion is in accord with the findings of other researchers who have studied the process of organizational alternation during the innovation process, such as Duncan (1973) and Burns and Stalker (1961) in non-school settings, and Coughlan et al. (1972) who reached a similar conclusion in a school setting.

This phenomenon posed two problems for administrators. First, it caused dissension among staff. Some of those who participated in heuristic decision making during the early stages of the innovation resented the increasing centralization and their own decreasing participation. There was some consequent loss of morale. Others perceived it as a natural evolution and accepted it. Still others, those hired since or those who preferred that orders be "handed down," were pleased. Thus, principals had to adopt decision-making policies which took account of conflicting expectations.

A second, related problem was that routine decision making is not conducive to creative problem solving. The steps taken to individualize programs so far still fell short of the ideal, but this was not a burning issue among staff. Administrators and others concerned with renewal, therefore, either maintained a vigorous innovative stance or created additional decision-making groups and structures to facilitate creative problem solving. The

alternative which was apparent in some schools was for some staff members to become complacent or apathetic.

Implications.

1. Principals and staff must expect that the nature of the decision-making process will change during the stages of an innovation.
2. Administrators must learn to choose which problems are best decided by the heuristic mode and which are best decided by the routine mode.
3. Groups and structures should be established and maintained to re-evaluate performance gaps and regenerate the innovative process.

Conclusion K

The structures and processes utilized make a significant contribution to the successful implementation of programs of individualized schooling.

Discussion. This conclusion accords with the findings of other researchers in schools which have implemented similar innovative programs (Lipham, 1977).

The methodology of this study does not permit a conclusion which asserts that participative decision making during the innovation stages and via the structures and processes described above is an essential prerequisite for the successful implementation of individualized schooling. What can be said, however, is that the staffs of the selected schools felt that that participative decision making was important.

Implications for Research

Since the previous implications dealt primarily with practice, this concluding section contains some suggestions for further research regarding the decision-making process in senior high schools that are implementing programs of individualized schooling.

A clearer definition is needed for programs of individualized schooling. In the selected schools, differences in philosophy existed and were manifest in a diversity of approaches to individualization. They used a variety of methods: course diversity, variability of course sequencing, colocation of teachers and students of like educational philosophies, flexibility of credit and other means to meet the educational and career needs of individual students. A systematic approach to these many program elements is needed, including study of the many combinations to ascertain which may be most useful for schools of varying size, location, complexity, and clienteles served.

With regard to the decision-making process, although this study identified some of the significant variables, further investigation is warranted; first, to identify and describe other variables; second, to refine the organizational constructs of participation, centralization, routinization, and staff satisfaction; and third, to develop theory which suggests relationships between and among the variables. From such a theory it might be possible to

develop hypotheses which can be tested through the methodologies of empirical research.

Since the participative approach to decision making is such a pervasive and significant factor in the process, further research should be conducted to identify and describe the elements of participation in decision making and to relate them to the contexts of, for example, different kinds of issues, time frames for decision making, and stages of the change process.

Resolution of conflict was a recurring concern to staff and administrators alike. Research is needed to examine the nature of conflict in schools and to determine ways of handling it.

The decision-making processes in most of the schools imposed new and expanded role expectations for teachers, notably their involvement in new decision-making areas such as buildingwide decisions and student advising, fields traditionally assigned to others. Staff response to these changing roles and their preparation for them should be examined.

A recurring and important finding of this study was that the nature of the decision-making process was related to the change stage of the innovation process. Longitudinal research might determine the effect of the change stage on such variables as roles of teachers and administrators, as well as the functioning of decision-making structures.

Staff satisfaction with the decision-making process was generally very high, yet the schools were operating in different

climates within their districts. Comparative studies should be conducted to examine the interrelationship between decision making in the schools and in their districts.

Finally, studies are needed which explore the relationship between the decision-making processes in schools and student achievement in the instructional programs which the administrative structures groups and processes are intended to facilitate.

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APPENDIX A

TELEPHONE SURVEY

TELEPHONE SURVEY

Name of School: _____ Phone: _____

Location: (City) _____ (State) _____

Person Contacted: _____ Position: _____

Researcher: _____ Date: _____

Communications:

1. Initial telephone contact on: _____

2. Cover letter and abstracts sent on: _____

3. Dates set for school visit: _____

_____

4. Other contacts:

Name	Position	Date	Comments
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

5. Letter of thanks sent on: _____

Comments:

Telephone Interview Schedule

A. Introduce yourself as a project assistant from the Wisconsin Research and Development Center.

B. Refer to the mission of the Center and specifically of the unit Studies of Administration and Organization for Instruction.

The Center is currently engaged in a research and development project relating to individualized schooling in secondary schools. Three companion research studies are proposed:

1. Investigation of the change processes which have brought about programs of individualized schooling.
2. Investigation of the intra- and extraorganizational factors which relate to individualized schooling programs.
3. Investigation of the decision-making processes in senior high schools which are implementing such programs.

C. Mention that the school concerned has been recommended as one which is implementing a program of individualized schooling.

D. Ask if the present is a convenient time to pursue the matter. If not, establish a more appropriate time.

E. If it is convenient,

(1) Explain in more detail the proposed program of the Center (see Abstract);

(2) Seek permission to ask questions which would help compile an information file on the school and decide its suitability for further study.

F. Ask if the informant has any questions at this stage. If yes, respond.

G. Proceed to ask the following questions and note answers.

1. Background information.

Name, address, telephone number.

Staff: principals and assistants, total number of teachers, ethnic balance.

Students: grades, enrollment, ethnic and sex balance.

2. Proceed through checklist which operationalizes the nine components adapted from IGE/Secondary:

(1) Do you have an instructional program which has been planned for each student and contributes to attaining the school's objectives?

Is there a basic skills program?

Are there minimum competencies required for graduation?

Is there objective based instruction?

Are curricular materials developed to promote individualized instruction?

What are the student evaluation procedures?

Is there multiaged grouping?

Is there flexible grouping and independent study?

Are there community experiences programs?

Are there vocational and other specialized learning programs to meet individual needs?

(2) Is there a teacher-advisor program?

Is there student participation in selection of courses?

(3) What are the administrative arrangements?

Is there an instructional improvement committee?

Are there schools within the school?

Are there alternative schools?

Is there team teaching?

(4) Is there a program of home-school-community relations?

(5) Is the school connected to leagues, networks or other support agencies?

(6) Are there any other features of the school which relate to individualized schooling?

H. Ask if the school would be willing to cooperate in the research studies which are proposed.

I. If the reply is favorable say that a letter will be sent, together with an abstract of the Center's proposed project. Mention that the final selection of schools will be made in the near future and that we will be in contact soon.

J. Thank the person for his time, interest, and cooperation.

APPENDIX B

ABSTRACT OF PROPOSED RESEARCH

the
Wisconsin
Research and Development Center
for Cognitive
Learning

the University of Wisconsin 1025 West Johnson Street Madison, Wisconsin 53706 (608) 263-4200

Dear

Thank you for your warm response to our telephone call in which we sought information regarding the program to individualize instruction at _____High School--particularly the administrative and organizational arrangements you employ to facilitate individualized instruction.

As you requested, enclosed is a summary of the research programs planned by the Wisconsin Research and Development Center for the forthcoming year.

We would be pleased if you would send us any materials describing the curriculum and the administrative and organizational arrangements for your school so that we might familiarize ourselves with them.

The program and organization which we discussed on the telephone indicates that the school may be an appropriate one for further study. We have therefore included it on our list of schools and will be calling you shortly to discuss with you the possibility of our conducting research in your school.

Should you wish to contact us, please do so at 608-263-4266 or 4267.

Cordially yours,

John Daresh
Project Associate

Noel Watkins
Project Associate

Glenn Neiner
Project Associate

Enc.

SUMMARY OF PLANNED RESEARCH STUDIES ON THE ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION BY THE WISCONSIN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

The Administration and Organization for Instruction Unit of the Wisconsin Research and Development Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison is currently engaged in a research and development project regarding individualized instruction in secondary schools.

Headed by Dr. James M. Lipham, the unit is engaged in three tasks:

1. Research on the decision-making processes which facilitate effective instructional programming for the individual student;
2. Development of prototypic organizational models for use by innovative schools;
3. Preparation of staff development materials which describe the alternative forms of administrative organization.

Initiative for the research studies began with a national conference conducted by the Center on individually guided secondary education in April, 1976. A similar invitational conference will be held in Spring, 1978, when administrators may meet with Center faculty and students conducting research and development activities in secondary education.

Two studies have investigated staff perceptions of the desirability and degree of implementation of IGE/Secondary objectives in their schools. Three studies are proposed for 1977-78. Each study will focus on an aspect of the organizational arrangements as they relate to the implementation of individualized instruction in the school.

The study by John Daresh will examine the impact that external and internal factors have upon the high school and the school's ability to maintain and strengthen its program of individualized instruction. The researcher will interview school personnel and others to determine (1) what there is about the internal operation of the school which tends to provide a facilitative environment for the individualized program, and (2) what factors in the immediate environment of the school seem to enhance or inhibit the school's program.

The study by Glenn Neiner will identify and describe the key factors which were operative in facilitating the change process in secondary schools. The study will seek to (1) identify and describe the strategies within the change process that occurred, and (2) discover the critical factors in the change process as well as the relationship between them.

The study by Noel Watkins will examine the decision-making process within the school. He will examine the domains of decisional autonomy accorded each of the sub groups--principals, subject departments, sub-schools, teaching teams, etc.--in the areas of curriculum, resource allocation, etc. The effectiveness of the decision-making process in facilitating the school's individualized instructional program also will be assessed.

Field methodology will be used in each of these descriptive studies. Data will be collected from analysis of available documents and from open and structured interviews held with principals, departmental chairpersons, heads of subschools or teams, counselors, and teachers. John Daresh also wishes to speak with principal(s) of other high schools in the district, central office personnel, the president of the school board, and presidents of the parents and the teachers' groups and associations.

The three companion studies will take place simultaneously in each school; each visit should take approximately four to five days.

The anonymity of all respondents will be strictly guarded and at no time will the identity of participating individuals, schools, or school districts be revealed. The results of these studies of six selected senior high schools across the nation will be published in the form of technical reports and will be distributed to each school involved in the studies.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. I am a Project Assistant, Wisconsin Research and Development Center for Individualized Schooling. The mission of the Center, and specifically of the unit, Studies of Administration and Organization of Instruction is to develop organizational models which schools may use.
2. There are three companion studies. John Daresh is exploring the factors inside and outside the school which enhance or impede the program--facilitative environments. Glenn Neiner is studying the change strategies used to implement the program. I am investigating the decision-making process used in the school and teachers' perceptions of it. We are studying six schools and interviewing a number of people in this school.
3. Specifically, I want to get at:
   (a) the actual decision-making process--what actually happens, and (b) what the school personnel think would be ideal. That is, who makes what decisions, when, where, and how? And, who should do so?
4. We will use the data to compile a technical report which will be published by the Wisconsin Research Center for Individualized Schooling. No person and no school will be identified by name or directly associated with data or quotations. The human subjects form is to be signed by you to signify your agreement.

5. I will take notes, but if there is anything you would not like me to note, please say so.
6. I am interested in your position here--what you teach, what other roles you have, how long you have been here, how you became involved with this program--things like that.

Background Data:

a. School _____

b. Date, and Number of Interview_____ _____

c. Respondent's Name _____

d. Respondent's Position _____

e. Length of Respondent's Tenure in the School _____

f. Special Notes _____

_____

_____

_____

Basic Questions:

1. From your experience and perspective what is the decision-making policy in this school?
2. What structures have been established for decision making? What is their membership? How do they function? What matters do they deal with?

3. What is the involvement of individuals and groups in the decision-making process?
4. What value do you attach to each of the structures, groups, and processes? What do you like most? What would you change?
5. What is your satisfaction with the decision-making process in this school?

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Research Study

STUDIES OF ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION FOR INSTRUCTION:

ORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL FOR INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION

Informed Consent Form

The research study in which you are participating is designed to examine functions, processes, and role relationships in schools that emphasize individualized instruction. The purpose of the study is to utilize organizational theory to refine and improve the structure of the school. In conducting the study, researchers will conduct individual (or group) interviews with administrators, department chairpersons, teachers, aides, and others regarding their actual (real) expectations and behaviors, as well as their idealized (desired) expectations and behaviors.

The anonymity of all participants is guaranteed and no individual, school, or school district will be identified in any reports of the research. It is expected that the results of this research will be of both theoretical and practical value to the field of education and to the public at large.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has formally assured the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (DHEW) that it will assure the protection of any human being exposed to risk in any project or program that DHEW or any of its agencies has been requested to support. A copy of this assurance will be made available to you upon request.

There are no known discomforts or risks associated with any of the procedures in which you will participate and such procedures are in conformity with accepted professional practice.

Any questions you may have concerning the procedures to be utilized in this study will be answered. You are free to withdraw your consent and to discontinue participation in this study at any time.

Please sign below to indicate your consent to participate in the study.

_____ _____

Subject Date

APPENDIX E

FOLLOW-UP LETTER

the
Wisconsin
Research and Development Center
for Cognitive
Learning

the University of Wisconsin · 1025 West Johnson Street · Madison, Wisconsin 53706 · (608) 263-4200

Dear

We would like to thank you for your very warm reception into your school. Your people did a superb job of making us feel at home and assisting us in accomplishing our objectives.

Please extend our sincere thanks to all the members of the administration and the staff who were exceedingly cooperative with us while we were there. We found the personnel in your school to be very warm and dedicated professional persons. It was a pleasure meeting and talking with them.

We were impressed with what we observed in your school. We found our visit to have been fruitful in terms of our project. Plans are presently being developed for the Secondary Schools Conference to be held here at the Center in March. We hope to see you at that time. You'll receive more specific information regarding the conference as soon as it becomes available.

We wish you the best in all your endeavors. If we can be of any assistance to you, please don't hesitate to contact us at the Center.

Sincerely,

Glenn Neiner
Project Associate

Noel Watkins
Project Associate

John Daresh
Project Associate

"END OF DOCUMENT"